

A
DISCOURSE
OF
GOD'S WISDOM,
IN THE
Impetration *and* Application
OF
REDEMPTION.

By J. IREMONGER, Minister
in *Buckingham.*



L O N D O N :

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DISCOURSE

OF

1578/3634

REDEMPTION



To the Reader.

THE Wisdom of God is that among all the Divine Perfections, that does most exercise the Thoughts, and raise the Esteem and Veneration of the pious and intelligent Part of Mankind. With what Advantage and Pleasure have the Wisest and Best of Men many times employ'd themselves in the Contemplations of that Wisdom, which displays it self in the Works of Creation and of common Providence: But it is in the Contrivance and Accomplishment of Man's Redemption, that this Wisdom does appear most beautiful and yet most amazing. It is here that you will find the brightest and the most compleat Discoveries of that Wisdom, which is infinite and all-comprehending: Here, more than in any other Instance whatsoever, God has abounded towards Us in all Wisdom: Here, if any where, You may view the Dimensions of the Divine Wisdom: And if not see the utmost to which it possibly could reach, yet the greatest Instance of it that ever did any way appear. Here it displays it self in all its various Folds and Windings, Eph. 3. 10. Here are its Treasures open'd; and its Depths discover'd, so far at least as is proper for our present State, Col. 2. 3. 1 Cor. 2. 10.

This is the great Mystery of Godliness, 1 Tim. 3. 16. that exercises the admiring and inquisitive Thoughts of the Holy Angels themselves: even they, who yet are not Sharers with Us in the Advantage, do notwithstanding stoop down with utmost Earnestness and Application to pry into the Wonders of Redeeming Grace, 1 Pet. 1. 12.
and

To the Reader.

and to learn by the Church on Earth, that there are such Reaches in the Wisdom of God, as never had appear'd in the Superior World, whether in his Dealings with Sinless, or with sinning Angels. Eph. 3. 10. And shall not We, who are most immediately concern'd in the amazing Design; We, in whose Favour it was set on foot, and is carrying on to Perfection; shall not we oft and pleasedly employ our Thoughts upon this wonderful Wisdom.

The Pious and Ingenious Author has employ'd most useful and excellent Pains, to assist You in Your Meditations upon this great Subject: That this his elaborate Discourse may greatly help to spread the Knowledge of this Divine Wisdom, and the Wonders of Redeeming Grace in the World; that the Offers of this Wise Grace may thereupon be more highly esteem'd, and more readily and universally complied with; and that thus Multitudes may be fitted for the Entertainment and Exercises of that Day, when the great Redeemer shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe; is the earnest Prayer of Us, who are

London, Decem.
14, 1710.

Desirous to help on the
same blessed Designs,

B. Robinson.
W. Tong.

E R R A T A.

P Age 13. line 11. read all together. P. 14. l. 28.
r. Sinner, p. 31. l. 34. r. as Minerals.

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OF
God's Wisdom, &c.

EPHES. I. 8.

*Wherein he hath abounded towards
us, in all Wisdom and Prudence.*

THE Divine Wisdom consider'd as
in God, is God himself. Who as
he could not but have been, and
cannot cease to be; so could not
but be Wise, and cannot cease to be so. He
can't act unjustly, because of his Essential
Rectitude; nor unwisely, because of his In-
finite Wisdom: All the Acts whereof arise
from one uncompounded Essence. But the
same Essential Wisdom, as related to diverse
external Objects and Effects, may be diverse-
ly conceiv'd of. And hence 'tis called Coun-
sel, Prescience, Prudence, &c. Under
B which

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which Notion we now consider it ; (*viz.*) in the Effects and Objects ordered by it.

Now the Suitableness of Causes to produce their Effects, the Subordination of one Cause to another, and the absolute Dependence of particular Causes on the Universal, is undoubtedly the Product of Wisdom ; from whence you may guess at our Design in the following Discourse, which is to shew the Reciprocal Harmony of Causes subordinate with supream, and of both with our universal Apostacy ; together with the intire Dependence of all on the Free Grace of God. To which purpose the Text and Context are not unsuitable. Wherein we have,

The Spring of Redemption discovered.

The Riches of Grace, or God's gracious Nature.

The external meritorious Cause, Christ by his Blood.

The Fruit thereof ; Forgiveness of Sin.

The Display of it ; In all Wisdom and Prudence.

Here seems to be an amazing Climax: Wisdom and Prudence, all Wisdom and Prudence, abounding in all Wisdom and Prudence. Who has abounded, &c. God the Father ; exprest in *ver.* 3.

In what ? In the Fruits of Grace through Christ, as to the Impetration and Application thereof.

To whom ? To Men, not Devils ; toward us.

How ? In all Wisdom and Prudence.

The Nature of the Privileges obtained by Christ, shews in what a dismal State by Sin,

* The act of obtaining by prayer or entreaty

* He refers to *χαιρος*.

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Sin, God's merciful Design to recover us through a Redeemer doth presuppose us. Ver. 4.

He hath chosen us to be holy, as foreseeing us self-destroy'd. To be without Blame, as being blame-worthy. In Love, this implies that we were hateful. Adoption presupposes our Forfeiture of Birth-right Privileges. Ver. 5. Acceptance, that by Sin we are condemn- Ver. 6. able. Redemption implies our Captivity; and Forgiveness our Guilt.

In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace: Wherein he hath abounded towards us, in all Wisdom and Prudence. Ver. 7. Ver. 8.

Now God the Father hath display'd the Wisdom and Riches of his abounding Grace;

First, In finding out a Medium, by his Wisdom, to redeem the fallen Creature, and yet maintain the Rectitude of his Nature. To execute the Curse, without damning the Transgressor, and bestow the Blessing without Favour to the Transgression. To render the sinful Holy, the hateful Lovely, and the blame-worthy without Blame. Aliens adopted, Captives redeemed, Guilty forgiven, and Condemned justified. How has God abounded in all Wisdom? By this Expedient his Right of Government is asserted, and Mens Contempt thereof punished. The Goodness of the Law vindicated, and the Reasonableness of Obedience enforced. The Sinner reconciled without a Reproach to Holiness, and pardoned without a Wrong to Justice. Forgiveness justly purchased, and Eternal Life graciously bestowed. The Glory of Justice without a Satisfaction had

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not been preserved, nor the Glory of Mercy without Redemption been discovered, but by this Means both in their Lustre are displayed.

Secondly, God the Father has display'd the Wisdom and Riches of Abounding Grace, in disposing, by his Prudence, the several Parts of Redemption in such a State of mutual Dependance on, Subserviency to, and Harmony with each other; as that neither *Free Grace*, *Christ's Blood*, nor the Spirit's Efficacy are eclipsed in their Glory: nor divine Institutions with Man's Duty disannul'd in their Use. The Free Grace of God is highly advanced, and his Attributes not prejudiced. Goodness is glorified, Wisdom and Power adored, Mercy, exalted, Justice and Holiness revered. The Mediator's Office in all its Branches is magnified; Its Harmony with the Divine Attributes discovered, and the Sinners Abuse thereof prevented. The Spirits Office in its Correspondency with Christ's opened. The Grandeur and Efficacy thereof maintained; and the Creatures Subserviency thereto encouraged. The Gospel and Ministry, as subordinate Means established; their Comportment with Christ's Office, and our Apostacy demonstrated; and the Sinners Duty in waiting thereon enforced. The Exercise of Rational Faculties engaged, Industry excited, and the Honour of special Grace thereby defended. Grace kept on the Throne of its Glory, and sinful Man held to his Duty. In short, there's an admirable Harmony in Causes Supream with Subordinate, and in Subordinate with Supream.

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pream. A Trinity in Unity in the Instrument, comporting with Unity in Trinity in the Agent. The Harmony is mutual and interchangeable: All received from God, all return'd in Love and Praise to God the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit, until God shall be all in all. And then, as Grace harmonized with Glory, so will impressed Glory harmonize with represented Glory, where we shall see clearly, as all Benefits and Duties flow'd from the Divine Unity in Trinity, so all endeth in the Glory and Praise of Trinity in Unity for ever.

As to the Impetration or Procurement of Redemption, Wisdom is glorious in the Suitableness of Causes to Effects, in the Aptitude of Means to their End, and in the reciprocal Harmony of both.

All the Parts of this contrived Medium as well as the whole discover Depth of Prudence. We'll consider the Displays of Wisdom in both.

1st. With respect to the Person of the Redeemer. He that is the middle Person between the Father and Spirit, must be the middle one to mediate betwixt two that are at Variance. God and Man united in one Person, in order to unite God and Man in one Covenant.

The righteous Branch of *David*, and yet the Lord our Righteousness. The Messenger of the Covenant, and yet the Lord of the Temple. A Citizen of obscure *Bethlehem*, and yet the Ruler whose Goings forth are from everlasting. The Seed of the Woman as Man, and yet bruise the Serpent's

Jer. 28.

5, 6.

Mal. 3. 1.

Gen. 3.

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Head as God-man. A Prophet raised from among his Brethren, and yet to be heard on pain of Death. Great is the Mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the Flesh. The Fitness of his being a Mediator by Nature, to be a Mediator by Office, discovers Depth of Wisdom. He is Man to obey, God to merit by Obedience. Man to suffer, God to conquer. Man by Death to acquire Happiness for us, God by the Conquest thereof to apply Happiness to us. Man could not conquer Death, God could not suffer Death, but God-man in Union could die, and not be holden of Death. And herein he was the Antitype of the Scape-goat, and Goat offered in Sacrifice. How has God abounded in all Wisdom in the Fitness of the Hypostatic Union to execute his Priesthood? Man to teach by Doctrine, God to teach efficaciously. Man familiarly to instruct us, God to render us receptive of his Instructions. God only, had been too terrible for our Guilt; Man only, too weak for our Relief; but God-man, neither affrights us by his Majesty, nor discourages us by his Frailty. God to command, Man to obey; God-man to set us an Example, and render us conformable to it. God to require Obedience, and God-man to convey Strength to be obedient. The Union of Natures therefore qualifies him for the Discharge of Offices, and the Discharge of Offices for Redemption.

As God, he hath Zeal for the Divine Honour; as Man, Pity for our Misery; and as God-man is capable to answer the Resentments of God, and Necessities of Man. He could

** Union of the
Human Nature
with the Divine*

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could vindicate the Majestic Perfections which were affronted, and endure the Calamities which by Sin were deserved. He could honour the Divine Government by his own Subjection, and restore us to our Subordination; Purchase our Blessedness, and qualify us for its Enjoyment. God's dwelling with Man on Earth Hypostatically, was the greatest Pledge that he would dwell with Men influentially. Can he remain distant from us, who in his Son is united to us? Can he be disaffected to our Persons upon Union with our Natures? or be offended with our Race, in which perfect Innocency is found? He that composed the Difference is allied to both Parties at Variance. Son to God, Brother to Man, and as God-man is fit to make up the Breach betwixt God and Man; by removing God's Aversion from Man, and Man's Aversion from God. The Hypostatic Union is the Root of the Mystical; and we can't expect a greater Proof that fall'n Man may be re-admitted into the divine Favour, than the Assumption of human Nature into Union with the Divine Person. Christ's Manhood was full of Holiness, and the Divine Presence, to exemplify what gracious Illapses, and vital Influences, a Believer through him may enjoy while here. The Devils design'd to eclipse God's Goodness, and degrade Man's Nature in our Revolt; By the Hypostatic Union divine Goodness is more display'd, and our Nature more ennobled. Amazing Wisdom! 'Twas necessary in order to accomplish our Happiness, that Death should be suffer'd for Satisfaction; and

*The gentle
entrance of
one thing into
another*

overcome for Salvation. Now here's the Weakness of the Humanity for suffering, and the Almightyness of the Divinity for conquering. He who from everlasting was co-equal with God, in the Fulness of Time was
 Heb. 2. 14. coequal with Man. And hence he is a proper Days-man to lay his Hand upon both.
 Job 9. 33. He hath Interest in God, as being God; and Interest in Man, as being Man, and so as God-man is fit to present the Requests of Man to God.

2dly. There's an eminent Display of Wisdom in the other Parts of this contrived Medium, not only in the Redeemer's Person, but in his Offices. And these we find expressed together with the Union of Natures in
 Isa. 9. 6. *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his Shoulders; and his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.* A Child in respect of human Conception, a Son in respect of Generation. Wonderful in respect of his Person; God-man, Counsellor as to his Prophetic Office; The Everlasting Father as to his Priestly Office; The Prince on whose Shoulder the Government was to be laid, as to his Kingly Office. *John 14. 6. I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.* The Way in his Priesthood, the Truth in his Prophecy, the Life in his Kingdom; the Author of that Way that leads to Life, the Teacher of that Truth that directs to Life; the Giver of that Life which is to be had in that Way. The Way, because none can come to the Father but through him; the Truth, because none

Burkit in
 loc.

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none know the Father but from him ; the Life, because none live but in and by him.

Now the Displays of Wisdom are Glorious in the Fitness of Christ's Offices to accomplish the Designs of Mediation, if you consider,

1st. He was to reconcile God to Man and Man to God. There was thro' the Fall two great Obstacles in the Way to our Happiness : Guilt and Filth. We were guilty, and therefore needed Pardon to be acquired ; Filthy, and therefore needed Holiness to be restor'd. As Priest he hath by Sacrifice honour'd Justice, and so render'd it meet for God to pardon ; as Prophet and King he enlightens and quickens, and so renders us meet for Pardon. The Honour of governing God's Justice by his Priesthood is asserted, a Suitableness to God's Purity, by his other Offices is effected : Thus God is reconcil'd to Man, and Man to God. How hath God abounded in all Wisdom ! We were by Sin expos'd to Vengeance, and therefore needed an atoning Sacrifice, that we might be forgiven consistently with the Honour of Justice and Holiness. We were by Sin corrupted and defil'd, and therefore needed the Divine Image to be restor'd. The Redeemer as authoris'd, honours Justice and Holiness by his Priesthood, and so reconciles God to Man. By his Prophetic and Kingly Office, thro' his Spirit he repairs the Divine Image, and so reconciles Man to God. Thus he performs a Divine Work for us and in us. In the Lord there is Righteousness and Strength. He is made of God unto us Righteousness, and Sanctifi-

Sanctification. God's invincible Hatred of Sin hinders his Access to us, our insuperable Enmity by Sin hinders our Approach to God. The Mediator's Priesthood removes the former, his other Offices overcome the latter. As Priest he glorifies God's Attributes, honours his Government, and appeases his Majesty. As Prophet and King he dispels our Darkness, conquers Satan, cleanses our Natures, and restores us to Happiness. We cannot be happy but in the Chief Good, nor happy in him unless restor'd to our Likeness to him, nor restor'd to our Likeness to him, without the Knowledge of him. Christ as Priest recovers us to Happiness in God, by restoring us as Prophet to our Knowledge of God, and thereby as King to our Blessedness in God. This Blessedness lies in the Divine Pleasure resulting from the Excellency of the Object, and Spriteliness of the Act. Christ's universal Suitableness to raise us to it shews the manifold Wisdom of God. As Priest he has remov'd what clouded the Excellency of the Object, and hinder'd our Access to it. As Prophet he has represented its attractive Amiableness, and is authoriz'd to irradiate the Faculty. As King he communicates Divine Life, to enable the Soul to act upon it, whence results the highest Pleasure. In the Excellency of the Object there's an Infinitude of Truth, suitable to our Mind, and of Goodness suitable to our Wills. In the Spriteliness of the Act is Light of Truth, and Love of Goodness, which raises Pleasures to the Height of Beatitude.

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2dly. The Nature of our Apostacy shews the Necessity and Suitableness of Christ's Offices, and consequently the Displays of Wisdom in their Ordination. As blind and ignorant, we needed God-man for our Instructor. As Rebels against the Divine Government, and enslav'd to the Devil and Sin, we needed him for our King to subdue and conquer. As bound over to Judgment, and expos'd to Misery, we needed him for our Priest to intercede. Christ is made of God unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, and Sanctification, and by the Execution of his Offices accomplishes Redemption. Fallen Man ^{1 Cor. 1.} is not only plung'd into Woe, but senseless of his Misery, and the Way of Recovery. To remedy this, Christ is made unto him Wisdom, to teach him by his Spirit, in his own Way, his Disease and Cure. He is expos'd to the Law's Curse, and the gnawing Reflections of an accusing Conscience: To cure this, Christ is made unto him Righteousness, that our Bond to Punishment may be dissolv'd, and a well grounded Peace confirm'd. He is full of Enmity against God, and should Grace stoop no lower than a bare Remission, our Filth would damn us. To be deliver'd from the Danger of Hell without, and not freed from an hellish Nature within, would be a splendid Toile; rather than a real Privelege. To remedy this, Christ is made of God unto us Sanctification. Thus God-man, as fitted by his Offices, and commission'd by the Father, is universally suitable to remove our Darkness by his Prophetic Light, our Accursedness by his Priestly Merit,

Heb. 1.
2, 3.

rit, and Deadness by his Kingly Power. God in these last Days hath spoken to us by his Son as chief Prophet, who after he had purged our Sins as Chief Priest, sat down on the Right Hand of the Divine Majesty as King. As under the Law's Curse we want Justification, as void of the Divine Image we want Sanctification, and as expos'd to the Pain of eternal Loss and Sense we want Glorification. Now God-man as fitted by his Offices, and authorised by the Father, has Righteousness to answer our Guilt, Holiness to remove our Filth, Merit to acquire our Happiness, and Spirit to prepare us for it. Whence you see the Suitableness of Causes to Effects, and the Fitness of Means to attain their End, and consequently the Displays of Wisdom in the Redeemer's Offices.

3^{dly}. The Nature of our Salvation, and what was needful to our Instatement in it, shews the Necessity of the Redeemer's Offices, and the Displays of Wisdom in their Ordination. Three Things (as one observes) are necessary hereto, that it be declar'd, acquir'd, and applied. God-man as Prophet declares this Salvation, which by Nature we are ignorant of. As Priest he acquires this Salvation which by Sin we lost: And as King applies this Salvation which he has reveal'd as Prophet, and merited as Priest. The Doctrine of our Prophet publisheth it, the Merit of our Priest acquires it, the Efficacy of our King applies it.

4^{thly}. The Necessity of the Union of each Office to maintain the Honour of God's Attributes, and the venerable Dignity of the Mediator,

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Mediator, consistently with the Holiness, Comfort, and Happiness of the Sinner, shews God's manifold Wisdom in their Ordination. Divine Wisdom is honour'd by his Prophecy, his Goodness by his Priesthood, and Power by his Kingdom. Christ's Doctrine declares the first, his Testament the second, and his Government the last. By his Priesthood Justice is executed, and his Holiness asserted; his Government vindicated, his Mercy magnified, and in altogether his Wisdom glorified. By his Prophecy all is reveal'd, and our Ignorance cured. God discover'd to be righteously merciful, and mercifully righteous. Holiness with Grace, and Grace with Authority, are consistent. The Scepter of Justice is maintain'd, and the Indulgence of Mercy is granted. The harmonious Concurrence of each Office to support the rest, shews the Wisdom of God in a Mystery. Who dare despise his Teaching as Prophet, when they consider he is arm'd with Authority as King? Who can be terrified with his Majesty when they consider his Tenderness as Priest? Each Office has a mutual Support from the rest. As King he saves by Conquest, as Prophet by Doctrine, as Priest by Ransom. He teaches as Prophet what he has done as Priest, and will do as King. His Prophetic Office subserves the Honour of his Priestly; by the former he teaches the Necessity and Efficacy of his Sacrifice, how to be interested in it, and what Power is needful thereto.

By the latter he satisfies Justice, appeaseth Majesty, and procureth God's Favour; by
both

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both he reconciles God, and informeth Man. Hereby then the subordinate Means of Happiness are established, the Gospel and Ministry prospered, and all made to gather and perfect his Church. Our Hope therefore is supported, and our Reverence excited, our Diligence enforced, and our Consent solicited, our Holiness promoted, and Happiness secur'd: And in both our Comfort ensured. How admirably do Christ's Offices concur to subserve their mutual *Honour*!

Having then consider'd the Wisdom of the Parts, we come,

3^{dly}. To consider the Wisdom of the whole Expedient together, which eminently appears in that Medium whereby God exalts his Mercy, consistently with the Triumphs of his other Attributes. After Sin had entred into the World, if the threatned Penalty was not executed, the Honour of the Lawgiver, and the Righteousness of the Law had been reflected upon. If the Penalty was executed, Mercy was eclipsed, and Man's Happiness lost. If Vengeance be not taken on the Sin, whate're becomes of the Sinner, Holiness is affronted, Justice not satisfied, and Wisdom reproach'd. If Vengeance be taken on the Sin, the Honour of a wise Creation is lost. The Work of divine Counsel sinks into Ruin, and the Devil triumphs in the Success of his Cunning. Here are great Difficulties to be overcome, by reason of the contrary Demands of several Attributes. Justice calls for Execution, Mercy for Compassion. It is not indeed difficult to conceive how Vengeance may be taken on the Sin, with-

without the Salvation of the Sinner; or how the Sinner may be sav'd without taking Vengeance on the Sin. How Man may be restored by a Stretch of sovereign Mercy, or destroy'd by the Force of rigorous Justice. But here lies the Mystery, how the cursed Rebellion shall be punished with Death, and the apostate Rebel restor'd to Life. How the Fruits of Mercy may be dispens'd, and the Rights of Justice vindicated: How the Sentence may be taken from off the Sinner, and yet past upon the Sin. The Transgressor acquitted, and the Transgression condemned. The former restor'd to Life, and the latter punished with Death. Who can find out a Medium whereby the several Demands of the divine Attributes may be answer'd? To punish Sin with the greatest Rigour, and indulge the Sinner with the highest Favour. To destroy Sin with Safety to the Sinner, and recover his Loss without Favour to the Sin. Here the combin'd Wisdom of the whole Creation would have been baffl'd. Suppose the Divine Being had said, Thou art an undone Creature, but I am a merciful God, find me out a Satisfaction, and I will engage my Power for the Accomplishment thereof; After Myriads of Ages none could have been thought on. God could not suffer, Man could not bear such Sufferings, and who durst have thought of God's own Son. All the heavenly Intelligences would have been pos'd. To punish the Sin without damning the Sinner, acquit the Criminal without indulging the Crime, to send the former to Hell, and bring the latter to Heaven. In these

these Streights Almighty Goodness summon'd, as it were, all the Depths of Divine Councils together to find out a Medium to answer all these Purposes. Now the Union of Natures in the Person of the Redeemer, with the annexed Offices, is this blessed Expedient. By this Medium all the Rights of the Divine Attributes are preserv'd in their Harmony. Goodness appears inexhaustible, Sin formidable, and the Divine Government venerable. The Punishment of the Sinner is translated on the Substitute, that the Merit of the Substitute, may, according to Divine Order, be made over to the Sinner. And so Justice boils against the Rebellion, and the Bowels of Mercy yearn towards the Rebel. The Designs of Mercy are accomplish'd, and the Lustre of Holiness preserv'd; the Riches of Grace display'd, and the Scepter of Justice reverenc'd; the Honour of the Law-giver, and the Equity of the Law asserted; his Wrath appeas'd, and the dreadful Sentence suspended; his Right of Government vindicated, Sin disgrac'd, and Pardon dispenc'd. The Law preserv'd from Contempt, and the Creature not tempted to rebel. Man recover'd, and the Divine Attributes not injur'd. Grace magnified, and our Sense of Duty not lessen'd. Here is the Depth both of the Wisdom and Riches of Grace. Holiness triumphing in punishing the Rebellion, Mercy

Pf. 116. 5. exalted in sparing the Rebel. *Gracious is the Lord and Righteous.* Righteous in damning the Sin, Gracious in forgiving the Sinner. *Mercy and Truth have met together, Righteousness and Peace have embraced each other.*

Man's

Man's Punishment is remissible, his Happiness attainable, and the Rights of the Divine Attributes inviolable. *Glory to God in the highest, Peace on Earth, and good Will toward Man.* The same God is irreconcilable to the Offence, and appeasable to the Offender. *There is Forgiveness with thee that thou mayst be feared.*

Thus you see the Wisdom of Grace in the Impetration of Redemption; We come now to consider it in the Application; and here its Displays are glorious.

I. In that the Fruits of Grace are dispensed from the Father through the Son, by the Spirit, consistently with the Glory of Divine Power, Wisdom and Goodness. Power wisely creates by Goodness, Wisdom kindly governs by Power, Goodness powerfully preserves by Wisdom: Almighty Goodness engaged Infinite Wisdom and Power. Wisdom contrived the Order of Application, Power established what Wisdom had ordered, and so the Fruits of Goodness are dispensed in a way of Wisdom by the Efficacy of Power. What Goodness will communicate, that Wisdom will contrive; what Wisdom so contriveth, Power accomplisheth. Hence effective Power is subservient to directive Wisdom in communicative Goodness.

In our Return to God, he maintains the Glory of his Power, consistently with the Glory of his Goodness; and therefore will not treat nor be treated with but by a Mediator, in whom he asserts the Honour of his Majesty, and yet stoops to our Necessity; descends to the Transgressor, and so advances the Glory of Goodness; keeps his Distance
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from the Sin, and so preserves the Honour of Holiness. Thus he indulges the Sinner, without Favour to the Sin, and exalts his Mercy without Prejudice to his Authority. The Sinner therefore must come humbly and reverently, considering his Rebellion, chearfully considering his Grace to penitent Rebels. Our Contempt of his Majesty may cause us to be humble, his Readiness to forgive may cause us to be thankful. His Sovereign Grandure forbids his immediate Approach to Man, our Rebellion hinders our immediate Access to God. Our Return to God therefore by a Mediator is honourable to him, and comfortable to us. Hence we must come for Pardon with a due Sense of our Apostacy, and Reverence of affronted Majesty, with Purposes against wilful Rebellion, and of future Subjection. Again, God magnifies his Grace and Goodness consistent with his Wisdom and Power, and therefore has inseparably connected Benefits and Duties; commanded Duties as Means to Benefits, and offered Benefits as Motives to Duty, threatned Neglects of Duty with Loss of Benefit, giv'n gracious Help to perform Duty, and an actual Right in Benefits upon Performance thereof. Hence he crowns his own Grace with his own Gifts.

Repentance and Pardon are closely connected. Repent, that your Sins may be blotted out. The former required in order to the latter; he commands all Men every where to repent. The latter proposed as a Motive to the former; Repent for the Remission of Sin. Impenitency threaten'd with a Loss of Pardon;

Pardon ; *Except ye repent ye shall all perish.* Christ honour'd in working Repentance, and Grace exalted in bestowing Forgiveness ; He is exalted a Prince and a Saviour to give Repentance and Remission of Sin. Faith and Happiness are inseparably united ; He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting Life. The Duty enjoyned as a Means to the Benefit ; this is his Commandment that ye believe. The Benefit offered as a Motive to the Duty, *Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.* The Neglect of the Duty threat'ned, with a Loss of the Benefit ; *He that believes not is condemned already,* because he believes not. Gracious Helps given to perform the Duty ; what is the Greatness of his Power to usward who believe. An actual Right in the Benefit upon Performance ; *To as many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, even to as many as believe on his Name.* Thus God crowns his own Grace with his own Gifts ; *By Grace are ye saved thro' Faith, and that not of your selves, 'tis the Gift of God.* Shall not he that contriv'd our Reconciliation have the Right and Honour of establishing the Method of being actually reconciled ? As a Surety and Sacrifice could not be admitted in our stead after the Fall, without the Concurrence of the Supream Law-giver ; so neither can the Sinner be actually saved in its Virtue after 'tis offered, but on Compliance with the Forms God established in its Admission. And therefore our actual Interest in God's Fruits of Grace is only on personal Compliance with God's Terms of Grace. Hence Grace is dispensed in such a

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wise Order as enforceth Diligence, excites Care, encourages Hope, and condemns Neglects. Consequently the Redeemed are not lawless, Ordinances useless, nor Industry needless. God has wisely contriv'd the Acknowledgments of his glorious Attributes in the Sinners Return through his Son, by his Spirit to himself: By making him see his Loss and Misery, being hopeless and helpless, and that all is of free Gift, he is forc'd to ascribe all to free Grace. By making him see his Weakness and Deformity, he is forced to own the need of Divine Help, and so to give him the Glory of his Power. By making him see his Aversion to God, and Antipathy against all Good, he is forc'd to give him the Glory of his Holiness. By shewing him his Obnoxiousness to Death, and that it would be an Act of Justice to damn him, he is forc'd to give him the Glory of his Righteousness. In short, since he applies his Grace consistently with the Honour of Divine Authority, and Majesty, a Mediator on God's part, and Reverence on the Sinners part, is necessary. Since he applies his Grace consistently with Wisdom, Ordering, and Power ordaining. The Subordination of Offices and Ordinances, to the Spirit, with the Demands of our stated Attendance thereon, is suitable to and consistent with the Honour of his glorious and most sovereignly free Grace.

2. The Displays of Wisdom are glorious, in that the Fruits of Grace are communicated from the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit consistently with the Glory and Honour of all the Redeemer's Offices. These

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admirably harmonize with God's Attributes, and comport with our Apostacy, presuppose our Misery, and are suited to our Recovery. God would display his Wisdom in the Application of *Redemption*, and therefore authorized Christ a Prophet to declare it, and will have his Son honour'd as such, by the Sinner's hearty Consent to him in order to be taught as a Disciple in his Way. God will display his Goodness, in the Application of *Redemption*, and therefore authorized Christ a Priest, by Sacrifice, to remove the Obstacles of its Effusions, that the Fruits of Mercy may be dispensed without Prejudice to the Rights of Authority. Therefore all that come to God by him, must submit to his Righteousness, as the Ground and Cause of all they enjoy, or hope to enjoy. *Psal. 71. 16. I will make mention of thy Righteousness, even of thine only.* God will display his Power in the Application of *Redemption*, and so authoriz'd Christ a King to subdue and rule; therefore all that come to God by him must subscribe to his Sovereignty, and consent to be his Subjects, to be rul'd by him. Now as God is Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, so Christ is Prophet, Priest and King. Consequently his Offices must correspond with these Attributes. An authoriz'd Prophet to publish the Contrivances of Wisdom, an authoriz'd Priest to merit the Fruits of Goodness, an authoriz'd King to display the Glory of Power. In him there's Almighty Power, by which he wrought Miracles; admirable Wisdom, by which he governs his Kingdom; astonishing Goodness, by which he saves the

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Church.

Church. Hence every Office honours God, magnifieth Christ ; and engageth Man, presupposeth our Apostacy, and is suited to our Recovery. His Prophetic Office supposes us sunk from our Knowledge of the Chief Good, and the Way to its Enjoyment, into a State of Blindness, Ignorance, and Errour. His Kingly Office supposes us sunk from our Subjection to God, and Strength to obey ; into a State of Weakness, Enmity and Rebellion : His Priestly Office supposes us sunk from Blessedness in God, our Deserts of Death, and Inability to satisfy Justice, into a State of Selfishness, Idolatry and Misery. Now as they imply our Calamity, they also are adapted to our Relief. The Prophetic Light meets with our Ignorance, the Priestly Merit with our Misery, the Kingly Power with our Enmity. A Teacher is suitable to the Ignorant, an Advocate to the Guilty, and a Saviour to those in Misery. Consequently Christ as authorized is universally fit to restore us to Blessedness in God as Priest, by restoring us to our Knowledge of God as Prophet, and Obedience to God as King. Every Office therefore, is apt to excite our Reverence, and support our Hope ; to nourish Humility, and raise Gratitude, to glorifie Christ, and save the Sinner. As Reconciliation presupposes a Breach of Friendship, Remission our Bond to Punishment, Sanctification our Filth, and Adoption our Forfeiture of Privileges ; so a Reconciler is suitable betwixt Enemies, a Saviour for the lost, a Surety for the insolvent ; a Redeemer for Captives, and an Intercessor for Offenders. When clouded with Ignorance

Ignorance, how suitable was Light to guide us? When stray'd out of the Way, how suitable the Way it self should descend to direct us? When lost the feeling of our Losses, how suitable that Life should quicken us, yea, quicken in us a Sense of our Loss? When sunk into Enmity, how suitable was an earnest Image and Pattern of Love to allure us? In the Application of Redemption, as God provided for the Honour of his Goodness consistently with the Honour of Wisdom and Power, so for the Honour of Christ's Priesthood, consistently with the Honour of his Prophecy and Kingdom. As none must condemn God's Majesty, because of his Compassion, so none must despise Christ's Government because of his Bloodshed; since it secures the Honour of God's Authority, as well as the Sinner's Indemnity. Our Blindness requires his Help as Prophet, our Deadness his Power as King, as well as our Accursedness his Merit as Priest. Now the Wisdom of God is evident in that the Method of our Recovery upholds the Honour of Christ's Advocateship, consistently with the Honour of his other Offices. He makes the Sinner see his Ignorance, and therefore the Need of God-man for his Instructor; his Captivity to Sin, and therefore the Need of God-man for his Ransomer; his Obnoxiousness to Wrath, and therefore the Need of God-man for his Deliverer. Consequently, from a Sense of Blindness we must consent to be taught by him as Prophet; from a Sense of Guiltiness, consent to be saved by him as Priest; from a Sense of Deadness, consent to

Zech. 6.
13.

be quicken'd by him as King; and all this with a Resolution to be Teachable as a Disciple, under him our Prophet; Governable as a Subject, under him our King; in a Way of fiducial Dependance on him our Priest. For Christ teaches the Way to Heaven as Prophet, he opens the Way to Heaven as Priest; and brings into the open'd Way as King. He preached glad Tidings to the poor as Prophet, binds up the broken-hearted as Priest, and opens the Prison to such as were bound as King. God will not reduce a Sinner to himself with Prejudice to the Redeemer's Glory, and therefore wisely communicates his Grace consistently with the Grandeur of all his Offices, by making the Sinner clearly see his Need of all, humbly own his Want of all, and thankfully submit to him in all. Our Saviour is a Priest upon the Throne, advanced upon a Throne of Government, and therefore we must come reverently; upon a Throne of Free-Grace, and therefore we must come cheerfully. Amazing Wisdom! that the Glory of the Redeemer, and Peace of the Redeemed, should be thus consulted! How wisely is an Acknowledgment of the Redeemer's Glory contriv'd in the Application of Redemption.

3dly. God's Wisdom in the Application of Redemption appears, in that the Fruits of Grace are dispens'd from the Father, thro' the Son, by the Spirit, consistently with the Necessity and Glory of the Spirit's Office. In all intellectual Beings we conceive three Principal Faculties; Understanding, Will, and Efficacy. Correspondent hereto is Pow-
er,

er, Wisdom, and Goodness. Divine Goodness discover'd it self in the Person of the Father, the eternal Spring of Divine Communications. Divine Wisdom discover'd it self in the Person of the Son, removing the Obstacles of those Communications. Divine Power exerted it self in the Person of the Holy Spirit, rend'ring our Minds receptive thereof. According to that Oeconomy whereby the Order of Subsisting proper to each Person is intimated; Power is ascrib'd to the Father, Wisdom to the Son, Goodness to the Spirit. To be Originally of Himself is peculiar to the Father, to be Begotten peculiar to the Son, to proceed from Both peculiar to the Spirit. The Spirit is revealed by himself, the Son revealed by the Spirit, the Father revealed by Both. He is a Spirit of Wisdom discover'd by Prophecies, a Spirit of Power by Miracles, a Spirit of Goodness by Sanctification. A Spirit of Wisdom to instruct us, of Power to quicken us, of Goodness to attract us by Co-operation with Gospel-Doctrine, which Doctrine had its Original from God the Father, was published by God the Son, and sealed by God the Holy Ghost. He impresses the Divine Image on the Scriptures upon the Soul, by efficient Motions as a Spirit of Power, in sapiential Order as a Spirit of Wisdom; with attractive Communication as a Spirit of Goodness, and therefore is a Spirit of Life, Light, and Love; of Light to dispel our Darkness, of Love to conquer our Aversion, of Life to remove our Deadness.

Where several Con-causes are requisite to the Production of an Effect, there the Effect cannot

not be wrought till the last Cause has done its Part. Therefore none, tho' elected by the Father, and redeemed by the Son, can be in a State of Salvation, till sanctified by the Spirit. Without the Creating Work of the Father, we could never have had a Being; without the Redeeming Work of the Son, ne're a Well-being; without the Sanctifying Work of the Spirit, ne're a perfected Being. We could ne're have had Access to the Father's Grace, since the Fall, but thro' the Merit of the Son; We can ne're have an Interest in the Son, but by the Efficacy of the Spirit. The Free-Grace of God will never save us, the Blood of Christ will never justify us, unless the Spirit of Christ sanctifies us. Whence appears the Necessity of his Office, and its Execution, with the Honour that is due thereto. Now the Harmony of the Spirit's Agency with the Office of God-man, who sent the Spirit, is an amazing Display of Wisdom. The Holy Ghost, consider'd as a Spirit of Illumination, is the Effect of Christ's Prophecy; as a Spirit of Consolation, the Fruit of his Priesthood; as a Spirit of Life and Glory, the Gift of his Kingdom. As Christ's Substitute he enlightens in Subserviency to Christ's Prophetic Office, Teaching: He quickens in Subserviency to Christ's Kingly Office, Subduing: He comforts in Subserviency to Christ's Priestly Office, Interceeding. As Christ was sent to glorify the Father, so the Spirit was sent to glorify Christ. As Christ had a Command from the Father, what he should say and speak; so the Spirit had his Instructions from Christ, what
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to reveal. As Christ was the grand Promise of the Old Testament, so the Spirit of the New. It was under his peculiar Conduct as Christ's Substitute that the Divine Word was reveal'd, confirm'd and committed to Writing, not only for the Use of the first Age, but of all Successions in the Church. 'Tis by his Agency that the Truth of these Records are successively confirm'd by his continued Divine Efficacy on Mens Souls.

4thly. God's Wisdom in the Application of Redemption appears, in that the Fruits of Grace are dispensed from the Father, thro' the Son, by the Spirit, consistently with the Honour and Use of the Gospel and Ministry, as Means subordinate to the Spirit of the Redeemer. *Of his own good Will begat he us, with* Jam. 1. *the Word of Truth.* The universal and particular Causes are united in Operation. 'Tis no Dishonour for the Supream to work by the Subordinate, because God operates by the Immediation of his own essential Vertue. The Spirit's Agency therefore is as much to be revered in Effects produced by the Gospel and Ministry, as if these subordinate Means had not been established; and consequently the Intervention of Means with the Sinner's industrious Use thereof, doth not prejudice the Son or Spirit's Glory. As in the Kingdom of Nature, God could produce all natural Effects without any Subordination of natural Causes; so in the Kingdom of Grace, he could gather and perfect his Church without any Subserviency of Moral Causes; but 'tis for the Glory of his Perfections to dispense the Fruits of Goodness in such

such an established Order, as exalts his Wisdom, and asserts his Authority, without lessening the Triumphs of Mercy. The Gospel and Ministry therefore are subordinate to the Spirit's Influences; hence said to work together with him; and able to make us wise unto Salvation. The engrafted Word, able to save: Are mighty through God for the pulling down of strong Holds. In their Subordination are called the Ministration of the Spirit; The Power of God to Salvation; The Grace of God bringing Salvation; Great Salvation; The Word of God's Grace; The Arm of the Lord, and Sword of the Spirit; The preaching of the Cross to them that are saved; The Power of God: It pleased God by the Foolishness of Preaching to save such as believe. In Jesus Christ I have begotten you in the Gospel.

2 Tim. 3.
15.
Jam. 1.
21.
2 Cor. 10.
4, 5.
2 Cor. 3.
8.
Rom. 1.
16.
Tit. 2. 11.
Heb. 2. 9.

The Suitableness of the Divine Image on this Word, to impress the Divine Image upon the Soul, shews God's Wisdom in the Application of Redemption. 'Tis a Doctrine of Wisdom discover'd in the Platform of Mercy; a Doctrine of Goodness discover'd in the Benefits it reveals; a Doctrine of Power discover'd in the holy Effects it worketh. A Doctrine of Wisdom, and therefore adapted to the Ignorant; a Doctrine of Power, and therefore adapted to the Obstinate, fit to conquer Rebels; a Doctrine of Goodness, and therefore suitable to Enemies. A Doctrine of Wisdom to cure our Blindness, of Power to quicken us under Deadness, of Goodness to conquer our Averseness. A Doctrine of Wisdom to instruct us, of Power to subdue us, of Goodness to allure us; and therefore in all its Branches suited

suitcd to our Blindness, Rebellion, and Enmity. It contains the highest Truth with its Evidence, and therefore is most credible, as being adapted to our Understanding. It reveals the highest Good, and therefore is the most eligible, as being adapted to the Will. It contains the best Means and Motives to Grace and Glory, and therefore is most desirable, as being calculated to Self-Preservation.

Not only the Suitableness of God's Image on the Word, to impress his Image on the Soul, but the Harmony of this Gospel with the Redeemer's Offices, is a wonderful Display of Wisdom. As the same Redeemer is Prophet, Priest and King, so the same Gospel is the Doctrine of this Prophet, the Testament of this Priest, and the Rule of this King; and therefore has three Branches subordinately corresponding therewith. 'Tis the Doctrine of God-man Prophet, revealing the Wisdom of the Father in Redemption; 'tis the Testament of God-man Priest, containing the Goodness of the Father towards the Redeemed; the Rule of God-man King, discovering the Father's Power over the Redeemed.

Furthermore the Harmony of the Ministerial Office in its main Branches with the Gospel, and of both Gospel and Ministry with Christ's Offices and the Spirit's, shews the Wisdom of God's Works of Grace. The same Gospel is the Doctrine of our Prophet, the Testament of our Priest, and the Rule of our King. The same Ministerial Office authorizes to teach this Doctrine, to seal this

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Testament, and to govern by this Rule. Ministers therefore are impower'd and engag'd by Office, to preach this Doctrine sincerely, to seal this Testament regularly, to govern by this Rule universally. To teach this Doctrine of Free Grace revealed by Christ the Prophet purely, to administer the Testamentary Seal of the Priestly Saviour orderly, and to govern the Church according to the Rule of Christ their King constantly. Hence the same Ministerial Office harmonizeth with the Gospel, both harmonize with Christ's Offices; Wisdom consequently is glorified as well as Grace exalted in the Application of Redemption. Not only the Correspondence of these with each other, but the Comportment of both in their respective Order with Christ's Glory, and the Sinner's Apostacy, is a wonderful Display of Wisdom. This Gospel, as it respects Christ, spreads his Glory; as it respects the Sinner, is suited to his Recovery. Christ's Wisdom as Prophet declared by his Doctrine, his Love as Saviour declared by his Testament, his Power as King declared by his Law. He is manifested to be Wise by his published Doctrine, Gracious by Testamentary Gifts, and Venerable by his Authoritative Demands of Acceptance. This Doctrine of Grace meets with our Ignorance, this Testament of Love with our Enmity; the Royal Demands of our King with our rebellious Obstinacy. And therefore the Glorification of the Redeemer, and Salvation of the Sinner, mutually concur by the Gospel and Ministry. The Spiritual Distemper of a Sinner lies in the Blindness of his Understanding,

derstanding, and obstinate Perverseness of his Will; now what is more suitable to remove Moral Blindness than Gospel Light; the Ministry to open and apply it, with diligent Attendance thereon, under the enlightning Spirit. What more suitable to remove the obstinate Perverseness of the Will, than conclusive Arguments drawn from the Word managed by an authoriz'd Servant of Christ in his Name? How suitable are Ministerial Instructions to our Ignorance? Ministerial Perswasions to our Obstinacy? Wisdom therefore is glorified, and Grace exalted in the Harmony of God's Works of Grace. The Gospel and Ministry are both together so calculated to the Reason and Condition of fallen Man; that if any thing will work upon a reasonable Creature, consider'd as a subordinate Means, this must. The Weakness of the Sinner to saving Good does not so much rise from want of Natural Faculties, as of Divine Habits and Gracious Principles, even from Devilish Qualities, blind Ignorance, vicious Perverseness, and stubborn Malignity. Consequently the Gospel and Ministry have a natural Fitness as a subordinate Means to remove the Diseasedness of the Rational Nature.

5thly. God's Wisdom in the Application of Redemption appears, in that the Fruits of Grace are dispensed from the Father, thro' the Son, by the Spirit, consistently with the Exercise of Man's essential Nature. Some things are Substance without Life, are Minerals; some Substance and Life without Sense, as Vegetables; some Substance, Life, and

and Sense without Reason, as Brute Animals; but Man is compounded of all together, and therefore in the Unity of Human Nature, is a Trinity of the Vegetative, Sensative, and Rational Nature. This Mental Animal, or Incorporate Mind, is the Epitome of Heaven and Earth, and in his Nature allied to both. Now as there is a Trinity of Subsistencies in the Unity of the Divine Essence, so there's a Triplicity of Faculties in the Unity of the Rational Soul. Hence the Mind created in its natural Frame harmonizeth with the Mind uncreated. Thus we conceive Man was made in the Image of God. By the Soul's Acts we know its Faculties, and so its Nature. It understandeth, and therefore has a Faculty of Understanding. It willeth, and therefore has a Faculty of Willing. It acteth, and therefore has a Faculty of Acting: For every active Nature is essentially active. As many created Effects flow from one uncreated Cause, so a Trinity of Faculties arises from a Unity of Mental Substance, all one with the Soul in Essence, but not one and the same Faculties. An active Power to execute with Mind to guide, and Will to command: Three in One, and One in Three. The whole Soul acteth, the whole Soul understandeth, the whole Soul willeth, and yet to understand is not to will, and to will is not to perform. Therefore there's a Triplicity of Faculties in the Unity of the rational Mind. But the Moral Image being lost from off the Natural, there is a native Blindness in the Mind, a rooted Perverseness in the Will, and spiritual Deadness in the

the vital Power ; and therefore a Necessity of suitable Means with our diligent Use thereof. A Necessity of Prophetical Doctrine, to comport with our Ignorance ; of the Priestly Testament, to conquer our Enmity ; of the Kingly Authority, to subdue our Rebellion. A Necessity of our hearing this Doctrine, considering this Testament, and attending to this Law. For we need the Doctrine of our Prophet to instruct us, the Testament of our Priest to attract us, the Law of our King to command and threaten us, in order to get a right Disposition in the Soul to know, love, and obey God. *The Spirit of Power and of* ² Tim. 1. *a sound Mind.* A sound Knowledge of the Truth, a predominate Love to the God of Truth, and holy Power to live according to Truth. Now God restores the Moral Image in a way excitive and perfective of the Natural Image. His Work upon the Mind is not instead of Mind, or to render it useless, but to enable it in its proper Exercise. His Work upon the Will is not instead of the Will's Choice and Resolve, but to assist in choosing and refusing according to the Conduct of the rectified Understanding. Reason is insufficient without the Spirit, and the Spirit ordinarily worketh not on the Will, but by the Exercise of Reason, and therefore so acteth on the Faculties as disposeth them for Action. Saving Grace therefore is dispensed from the Father, thro' the Son, by the Spirit, consistently with the Exercise of Man's essential Nature. Had Sin destroy'd its Substance, as it hath its Rectitude, Man could not be capable of Commands or Threats, of

Rewards or Punishments, of Sin or Hell, of Grace or Glory, no more than Trees or Beasts. That Wickedness in his Nature which is his Weakness, neither makes void God's Right to govern him, nor his Engagements to be governed, and therefore does not excuse his Neglects to exercise his reasoning Faculties about his Happiness; and consequently the Consideration, Caution and Resolution of an unregenerate Man about Sin and Duty, under the Spirit, does not lessen his Glory and Honour. For he converts ordinarily in such a wise Order as lays the Glory of Holiness on Free Grace, and leaves the Blood of the Impenitent only on themselves. The wonderful Harmony of the Spirit's Efficacy in converting by the Word, with the Will's Freedom in attending on the Word, shews God's Wisdom in the Application of Redemption. As Man hath an essential Capacity to imbrace or reject a proposed Object, upon Deliberation, to act willingly according to the Judgment of right Reason; so the Spirit assists the Mind to see Truth in its Evidence, with the true Reason of things; inclines the Will to choose the best Things, upon the best Motives, and accordingly 'tis determined from Evil to Good, from an overpowering Sense of the Excellency of the one, and Turpitude of the other. The Efficacy of Grace therefore perfects, and not precludes the free Exercise of human Liberty. *Thy People shall be willing in the Day of thy Power.* What more free than the former? What more forcible than the latter? The Spirit acteth with insuperable Efficacy, the Soul

A Discourse of God's Wisdom. 35

Soul complies with admirable Freedom. *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned.* The Power is invincible, that the Malignity in the Faculties may be conquered. *What is the exceeding Eph. 1. Greatness of his Power to us-ward who believe.* 'Tis 19. most agreeable that no Violence be done to the essential Nature. *He draws with Hos. 11. the Cords of Love, and Bands of a Man.* If it 4. was not insuperable, Man's rooted Obstinacy would not be conquered; if it was not admirably temper'd to the rational Nature, Man's Faculties would be perverted. From the Suitableness of the Remedy to the Disease, and of the Application to the Diseased, we see God's Wisdom in Redemption. The Spirit's Efficacy is not lessened by the Intervention of Means, or the Sinner's industrious Use thereof. For an infinite Cause, such as the Spirit is, cannot be essentially distant from any created Effect, neither can a subordinate Cause be nearer the Effect than God, who operates by the Immediation of his own essential Vertue. The Honour therefore of special Grace conveyed ordinarily in the diligent Use of Means, is not to be ascribed to the Sinner's Industry, but to the Spirit's sole Agency. As his Efficacy does not preclude our Diligence, so neither does our Apostacy excuse our Neglect. For the spiritual Death is consistent with natural Life, and a Capacity thro' Grace, of the Introduction of a Divine Life, and therefore consistent with natural Actions, and Industry under the Spirit for spiritual Life. The derived Power ascribed to a subordinate Instrument includes the Efficacy and Honour of

the Agent. The Exercise then of rational Faculties under the Spirit for spiritual Life, in the Use of Gospel Ministrations, does not eclipse the Glory of the Spirit's Office. 'Tis indeed a Mystery how the Spirit should be the only and whole Cause of special Grace, and yet Man the Cause of his own Acts at the same time; to the Understanding whereof consider, that tho' the Agency of every particular Cause is absolutely dependant on, and subordinate to the Universal, yet the Denomination and Specification of the Act is from the particular Cause. The Sun shines by Vertue of that Power it had from God in the Creation, yet we don't say God shines, but the Sun. Man thro' the Help of the Spirit, and in Subserviency to him, is the Cause of his own Acts. 'Tis not the Spirit that repents and believes, but the Sinner himself, as being enabled by the Spirit, and yet the Spirit is the only and whole Cause of special Grace, and the Sinner no Cause at all. Whatsoever the Sinner does in Dependence on, and Subserviency to the Spirit, he does altogether as strengthened, actuated, and assisted by the Spirit. The Honour therefore of Conversion wrought in the aforesaid Order is wholly to be ascribed to the Spirit, notwithstanding the Sinners Industry in the Use of Means is ordinarily necessary, his Neglect thereof culpable, and meritoriously damnable.

6thly. The Wisdom of God in the Application of Redemption is admirable, not only in the Harmony of the Works of Grace without, in order to the Production of the Work

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of Grace within ; but also in the Harmony of inward Grace with God the Father, Son, and Spirit that did produce it, and with the Word and Ministry by which it was produced ; as may appear by an Induction of Particulars. We will therefore consider God's Wisdom in the subordinate Correspondence of inward Holiness (wrought in the aforesaid Order) with the imitable Attributes of God Creator, and with the Divine Law, being a Transcript thereof ; with the Temper, Office, and Example of God Redeemer ; with the Office and Influence of God Regenerator ; with the whole Word of God, indited by the Spirit in general, and with the Gospel and Ministry in particular.

Divine Wisdom is display'd.

1. In the subordinate Harmony of inward Holiness with God's imitable Attributes. As there is a Trinity of essential Principles in the Unity of the Divine Essence, and a Trinity of Faculties in the Nature of the reasonable Soul, so there is some kind of Triplicity in the Unity of the Divine Life. A Trinity of Operations in the Oneness of the New Creature. As the Mind created in its natural Constitution, harmonizeth with the Mind uncreated ; so this vital Principle in the Mind begotten must in its Nature and Frame correspond with the Mind that did beget: *The New Man is after the Image of him that created him.* As God is Power, Wisdom and Goodness, so the God-like Principle consists in derived holy Life, Light and Love, in impressed Wisdom and Goodness, with holy Promptitude to agreeable Acts. God glorifies

Col. 3. 11.

fies himself, *ad extra*, in the lively Impresses of his Attributes on intellectual Beings. By one single Act of his Omniscience he reviews the several Orders, and their receptive Capacities to take in from his Self-communicative Fulness, Influence and Impresses of Likeness. So he delights in the reciprocal Harmony of his own Attributes with this created Aptitude, and of these intellective Capacities with his own Perfections of Goodness, Justice, Truth and Holiness. The heavenly Nature and Actings therefore must be delightful to the God of Heaven. *Sweet is thy*
Voice, and thy Countenance lovely. The New
Man is after God, created in Righteousness and
Holiness. It impowers the Soul to have Sentiments worthy of God, and Motions suitable thereto. As there is no Effect but has something comporting with its Cause, so the new Nature must with its Author. It answers his infinite Greatness with Respectfulness, and his Majesty with Reverence, his Excellence with Humility, his Faithfulness with Trust, and his Goodness with Love, his Omniscience with Sincerity, his Wisdom with Wonder, and his Omnipotence with Watchfulness, his Propriety with Self-surrender, his Authority with Obedience, and his Beneficence with Gratitude. So far as the Principle is of God, so far will its Acts be God-like; for there is a Unity of Consent to him according to the Degree thereof. God loves himself as being most perfect Goodness, because of his transcendent Rectitude; the Divine Principle inclines the Soul to a predominate Love of God for himself, and to
 love

Cant. 2.

14.

Eph. 4.

24.

love it self in God, and for God, because it resembles him, and is related to him. God hates Sin because of its Opposition to his essential Rectitude; inward Holiness inclines the Soul to hate Sin as contrary to his Nature, Will and Law, because it sullies its Lustre, makes it unlike to God, and unmeet for his Presence. God delights himself in his own transcendent Amiability, and the derived Resemblances thereof, up and down the World. The Divine Principle tends to an holy Complacency in God, and in all the Effects of Divine Holiness in the Redeemed. The Harmony of inward Holiness with God's Attributes, and consequently the Union of Will and Designs in a sanctified Soul with God, demonstrates the Commands natural and reasonable; to be holy as God is holy; to be merciful as he is merciful, perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect. Rectitude of Choice and Action are eternally founded in God's Nature. 'Tis as natural to govern all his Acts by the highest Reason as to exist, and therefore whatever is regulated by right Reason must needs harmonize with God's Nature. Since he acts with Becomingness to his essential Rectitude, a Correspondence therewith in our Measure must be acceptable. To answer his Supremacy with Self-Subjection, his Simple-Independency with a just Sense of Self-nothingness, to put forth Acts of Love upon his Amiability, and Acts of Obedience to his Laws, must needs be agreeable. As the Law is a Transcript of God's communicable Attributes, so this vital Principle is a Transcript of the Law upon

Heb. 8.

10.

Gal. 6.

15, 16.

Tit. 2. 11,
12.Mat. 22.
37, 38.

the Soul; and therefore call'd *the Law written in the Heart*. The heavenly Nature there must harmonize with the Laws of Heaven. The inward Rule of the New Creature subordinately comports with the outward Rule of the Law. This is established in the Hands of a Mediator as a Guide of Practice, with respect to God, our selves and others. It serves in this lapsed State to bring us to Christ, as unto our Saviour. Christ brings us back to the Law, as unto a Director. Now the Harmony of this vital Principle with its grand Branches declares God's Wisdom in his gracious Works. 'Tis a Principle of Piety, inclining to pious Actions; a Principle of Vertue, inclining to Acts of Vertue. It disposes the Soul to act soberly with respect to our selves, righteously with respect to others, and godly with respect to God. Religiously towards God, and righteously towards Men. Christ reduces the Sum of the Law to the Love of God and our Neighbour. This vital Principle being an Habit of Love to God, harmonizeth with the first Table, in Acts of Piety and Worship; as to the Way, Manner, and Season of Performance enjoined. He that predominately loves God the Object of Worship, dares not neglect the Institutions thereof, dares not be careless therein, nor slight the Time of Worship. This vital Principle being a Habit of Love to Men, comports with the second Table, in Acts of Vertue as to our selves, and others. He that loves his Neighbour as a Man, and as a Christian, according to the discovered Degree of Goodness, will be ready to do him good, as to

to Relation, Life, Estate, or good Name, or backward to wrong him in any of them. Therefore Love is said to be the *Fulfilling of the Law*. The inward Principle of Grace, Gal. 5. 14. as well as the outward Doctrine in its Design and Tendency, teaches us to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts. Both are contrary Tit. 2. 11, to all Sin forbidden in the first Table, included in the Term Ungodliness; and to all forbidden in the second, included in the Term worldly Lust, and naturally tend to a conscientious Discharge of both. 'Tis this Comportment of the inward Law with the outward, that makes Christ's Commands not grievous, *his Yoke easie, and his Burden light*.

2dly. God's Wisdom in the Application of Redemption, appears in the Harmony of inward Holiness (wrought in the aforesaid Order) with the Temper, Offices, and Example of Christ. There is a Likeness to, and Resemblance of Christ's Temper, in the renew'd Habits and Qualities of Christ's Members. All Species of Beings have the same Nature and Actings with the first created Species; and therefore the Holiness of Christians must be con-natural to the Holiness of their influential Head. Consequently the Christ-like Temper must comport with the Temper of Christ. What was once said of Gideon's Brethren, may truly be said of Christ and Christians. *As He is so are They, each one resembling the Children of a King*. Both have the same Dispositions in kind; what the one hath above Measure, the other hath in their Measure. Hence said, *To bear the Image of the Heavenly* — *To receive Grace for Grace of his*

Judg. 2.
18.

2 Cor. 3. *his Fulness* — *To be changed into the same Image.*
 18. *To be conformed into the Image of his Son.*
 Rom. 8. Christ was one with us hypostatically; he
 29. that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified,
 are both of one. Christians are one with
 Christ habitually; he that is joined to the
 1 Cor. 6. Lord is one Spirit; one Relatively, and one
 19. Qualitatively; both one by Faith and one
 by Love; one Kingdom, made up of Go-
 vernour and Governed; one Body, consist-
 ing of Head and Members. Upon Compli-
 ance with Christ, as authorized, results not
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 a Right in the same Spirit, and his Influences,
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 19. To dwell in them, and to be formed in them. As
 Joh. 15.4. Christ dignified our Nature by the hyposta-
 Gal. 2.20. tic Union, so the Spirit of Christ highly en-
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 Principle

Principle with the Divine Temper of Christ. Hence we are exhorted to let the same Mind be in us that was in Christ. *To arm ourselves Phil. 2. 5: with the like Mind*—— This vital Principle comporteth with the Offices of Christ, as well as with his Temper. It answers his Prophetical by Adherence, his Priestly by Dependence, and his Kingly by Allegiance; yea, all together by Assent, Consent, and Affiance. Assents to them all as True, Consents to them all as Good, Resigns and trusts for the Accomplishments of their Designs in and upon us. The Union of Offices in the Head, is answer'd by a Union of harmonizing Dispositions in the Members. Counsel in Christ our Prophet, is answered by the Teachableness of Faith; Merit in Christ our Priest by the Fiducialness of Faith; Authority in Christ our King, by the Obedience of Faith. It receiveth the Atonement. Receiveth Jesus Christ the Lord; and hears the great Prophet in all things. All Graces are seminally contain'd in this vital Principle, and therefore here's Faith which embraces the Doctrine of our Prophet, revealing the Wisdom of the Father: Here's Hope which relies on the Merit of Christ our Priest, displaying the Grace and Love of the Father: Here's Love, which by Obedience submits to the Scepter of our King, administering the Government of the Father.

As in the Redeemer, whom God has made Head of the Church, there is a Junction of Teacher, Prince and Saviour; so in the Members of this Head, there must be a Junction of Duties and Dispositions harmonizing therewith.

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Maresius
Loc. Dec.
Pag. 262.

therewith. Disciples under him their Teacher, and therefore must be teachable; Subjects under him their Governour, and therefore must be tractable: Ransomed under him their Saviour, and therefore must be thankful, and comfortable. Love and Loyalty, Gratitude and Obedience, are as harmonious in the Redeemed, as Lord and Jesus, Prince and Saviour, are in the Redeemer. The Regenerate, by reason of this Harmony of inward Grace with Christ's Offices, may be call'd subordinate Prophets, hence said to be taught of God; subordinate Priests, hence said to offer up spiritual Sacrifices; subordinate Kings, hence said to be made Kings to God, to reign with Christ, to sit down with Christ on his Throne. Whether there be so many distinct Graces as Faith, Hope, and Love, &c. Or whether there be one vital Habit, diversified by the Diversity of its Objects, and disposing the Regenerate to act differently upon different Objects, I shall not pretend to determine. 'Tis enough to my Purpose, if the same vital Principle can be prov'd to harmonize with the Divine Temper and Offices of Christ. The Correspondence of inward Grace with the Temper of Christ, inclines to a Conformity to his Pattern, and to resemble him in Action as well as Principle: and therefore declares the Wisdom of the New-Creature. The Attributes of the Godhead are so tamper'd by its Union with the Manhood, as to become imitable. In the Mediator, God presents us with a Person like our selves, to encourage Imitation, for by him the perfect Purity of the Law after
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the Fall was exemplified; to that Purpose God became like to Man, to teach Man how to become like to God. Not that we are to imitate him in the Peculiars of a Redeemer, but as to Acts of Piety and Vertue requir'd in the Law; we are bound to write after his Copy. How sacred and venerable is God's Authority? How equitable is Obedience? How formidable is Rebellion? When God in our Flesh must obey for Satisfaction and our Imitation! The Union of all Graces and Vertues in Christ's human Nature, gives us Reason to conclude, that his Life must contain all Duties to God and Man, performed from the most generous Principle, in the most perfect Manner, to the most perfect End; and therefore that he is the most worthy of Imitation. Christ and Christians have the same Holiness in Kind, and therefore the same Actings in their Measure; *as he is so are we in this World.* Not that the individual numerical Essence of the Divine or Human Nature is communicated, but the same Grace in Kind which was in Christ above Measure, is, by the same Spirit, dispens'd to the Believer in his Measure, and therefore there must be a Conformity to Christ's Pattern; a Disposition in the New Creature to shew forth the Vertues of him that hath called us; to follow his Steps; to do as he did, and to walk as he walked. His Obedience to his Father's Will, has display'd all kind of Piety and Vertue; to the Honour of God, the Credit of the Gospel, the Settlement of our Faith, and Excitement of our Obedience. Invincible Constancy in a good Cause, serene

¹ John 4³
¹⁹.

¹ Pet. 2.
¹⁹.

^{v. 22.}
^{John 13.}

^{15.}
¹ John 2.
^{6.}

rene Meekness in bearing Wrongs, unmolested Patience in Adversity, intire Surrender to the Divine Will, quiet Submission to the Laws of Men, Steady Dependance on God under fiery Trials, unalterable Love under sore Temptations.

3^{dly}. The Wisdom of God in the Application of Redemption appears in the Harmony of inward Holiness with the Office and Influence of the Spirit, the Substitute of Christ. The Work of the Son includes the Work of the Father; the Work of the Holy Ghost includes the Work of the Father and Son, together with the Glory of their Operations: and therefore as inward Holiness harmonizeth with the Attributes of God, and Offices of Christ, so also with the Office and Influence of the Spirit of Christ. There is an amazing Co-efficiency betwixt the Spirit's Influences, and the Actings of this Vital Principle, and consequently a Display of Wisdom in the Comportment of the Grace of the Spirit, with the Spirit of Grace. The Descent of Divine Influences stirs up Operations from this gracious Habit; by these a further Receptiveness is introduc'd for further Divine Inaples. The Spirit of God, by his Divine Energy, does first actuate the Faculties, then these Faculties do reciprocally act towards him, by their acting hereupon towards God, they are render'd more receptive of more Communications from God. He first maketh Impressions of Holiness on the Soul, then it vehemently longs to be more holy; by its Longings to be more holy, 'tis render'd more meet for higher Degrees of Holiness.

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The Spirit, by his enlivening Efficacy, first moves the Soul to love God, then the Soul is mov'd most gladly, as well as powerfully, in Acts of Love towards God; by its holy Motions towards God, it is more qualified for higher Discoveries of Divine Love. *My beloved put in his Hand by the Hole of the Door, and my Bowels were moved for him.* The Spiritual Sight of God makes the Soul like to God; by the Increase of Likeness to him, the Soul is more dispos'd for the continued gracious Vision of him. There's a Kind of Circulation as to Divine Influences, and Gracious Operations; the former received in Obedience, the latter perform'd in Gratitude; all is receiv'd from God, all is return'd in Love and Praise to God, until God shall be all in all. The Holy Ghost, by Vital Communication, revives the whole Soul; then it returns suitable Affections answerable to its Incomes, and therefore the Spiritual Power it receives from hence renders it more conformable to the Methods of the Spirit. *That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.* As Nature produceth Nature, so the Holy Spirit begets Spiritual Habits, harmonizing with his holy Influence. The Properties of the Holy Ghost, and of inward Grace, being compar'd, will discover a Correspondence betwixt them, and consequently, a Display of Wisdom in the New Creature. These Properties are Truth and Goodness. Truth is a Conformity of a Thing with the Divine Intellect; Goodness is a Conformity of a Thing with the Divine Will. Created Truth and Goodness are but a Transcript and Resemblance

My be- Cant. 5.4

John 16.

13. Psal. 149. 10.

blance of the uncreated Mind. The Grace of the Spirit then must needs harmonize with the Spirit of Grace, and consequently Wisdom is glorified as well as Grace magnified. From the Nature of the Act may be learn'd the Nature of the Principle, and from both the Nature of their Original. Holy Acts shew an holy Habit, and both an holy Original, the Holy Spirit. As they flow from, so they must be suitable to their Principle and Original; and therefore inherent Grace must correspond and harmonize with the Nature and Office of the Holy Spirit. *If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit, q. d. Let Affections and Actions harmonize with the Spirit, and that new Principle of Spiritual Life he has implanted. They that are after the Spirit do mind the Things of the Spirit.*

Gal. 4.25.

Rom. 8.
5.

4thly. The Wisdom of God appears in the subordinate Comportment of inward Holiness which the Holy Scriptures indited by the Spirit in general, and with the Gospel and Ministry in particular. God's Image on the Word is an Impress of Power, Wisdom and Goodness; God's Image on the Soul is impress'd Life, Light and Love; and therefore the latter must harmonize with the former; the same Spirit is the Author of both. The Spiritual Nature then, must needs comport with the Scriptures, because it comports with the Nature and Offices of the same Spirit that indited them. It acts differently on different Passages thereof; assenteth to the Prophecies, obeys the Commands, trembles at the Threats, and embraces the Promises. The same Holiness requir'd in the Word is
implanted

implanted by the Spirit, as to Habit and Principle, in the Regenerate, and therefore there must needs be an Agreement betwixt inherent Grace and the Scriptures. As the Word is a Rule of Faith and Practice, so the new Nature is a subordinate Rule, and there- Gal. 6.
fore inclines to pursue Piety and Vertue as 15, 16.
Things agreeable, to avoid Impiety and Vice as things unsuitable; and therefore disposes to what is to be done or avoided in Subserviency to the Scriptures. There is such a con-natural Suitableness of the Truth and Goodness of the Word to the holy Light and Love of the Regenerate, that they do by inward Gift and Sensation, know its Original. As there is something in the Eye con-natural to Light, by which we see it, and in the Appetite con-natural to Food by which we know it, so there is something in the New Creature, con-natural to the Scriptures, that establishes in the Belief of them, an inward Knowledge of their Original, from a Suitableness of their Truth and Goodness to a sanctified Mind and Will: as the Operations of the Soul prove its Subsistence, and God Creator; so the Motions and Actings of inward Grace, prove its Being and Christ Redeemer. Do not the Effects of this Doctrine prove its Nature and Original? Holy Effects an holy Cause, Good Fruit a good Tree. As Life hath a self-discovering Property whereby we know it, and Light a self-discovering Property whereby we see it, so the Scriptures and Inward Holiness also have a self-discovering Property of their Nature and Original. God Creator hath a standing
E Testimony

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Testimony among Mankind, in natural Conscience: God Redeemer hath his standing Testimony among his People in the New Creature. As 'tis unreasonable to deny the Sun when we see its Light, so to deny the Scriptures when we see divine Effects wrought by them. The Word could not produce such a divine Harmony in Souls to it self, without a Divine Power. God would not erect such a Power by a Falshood; from God's thus Owning it, we conclude it is his own. This vital Principle harmonizeth with the several Branches of the Gospel and Ministry in particular, as well as with the whole Word of God in general. The Gospel largely taken, may be consider'd as the Doctrine of our Prophet, as the Testament of our Priest, as the Law of our King. In a Word, Holiness inclines the Soul sincerely to embrace the Doctrine of our Prophet, thankfully to accept of the Testamentary Gifts of our Priest, universally to obey the Law of our King. It inclines them to be teachable as Disciples, according to Gospel Doctrine; to be governable as Subjects, according to Gospel Rule; to be comfortable, as instated in Life by the Gospel Testament. It believingly heareth the Ministerial Publication of this Doctrine; it inwardly seals to the outward Administrations of this Testament, it submits to the Exercise of Discipline according to this Rule. It inclines the Soul in its Nature and Tendency, to comport with the Gospel and Ministry, in the several Branches thereof.

5thly. Divine Wisdom appears in the Harmony of Grace with Glory. As the Life of
Grace

Grace consists in derived Power, Wisdom, and Goodness; so the Life of Glory consists in the beatific Vision of essential Power, Wisdom and Goodness; in perfect Assimilation in our Measure hereto, whence results unspeakable Fruition hereof. The Life of Holiness consists in deriv'd Wisdom, whereby we know the best Means to attain the best End; in deriv'd Power, whereby we overcome the Devil, World and Flesh, in deriv'd Goodness, whereby the Soul is con-naturalized to the Chief Good. The Life of Happiness consists in the beatific Vision of the universal Good, in the perfect Contemperation of our Faculties hereto, whence arises our compleat Beatitude. And therefore Holiness harmonizeth with future Happiness. As the lowest Degree of Grace is a Step to Glory, so every further Degree is a nearer Approach thereto: Hence as we grow in Holiness, we draw nearer to Happiness; in which State we shall be all Holy. The Heavenly Nature therefore corresponds with the State of Heaven. God did so contrive the Nature of Things that such Effects should naturally follow upon such Actions, and made their Connection so necessary as that the very Act should be its own Reward or Punishment, in the Nature of the Thing. As Sin therefore tends to Misery, so does Holiness to Happiness; and consequently holy Acts themselves naturally comport with holy Objects. Such is the Frame of Humane Nature, as that Holiness is our receptive Capacity for the Divine Favour here and hereafter; he then that most increases Holiness, most widens his Capacity for

the Enjoyment of Happiness. Spiritual Life therefore, harmonizeth with Eternal. God is primitive Truth, and so most suitable to the Understanding; the universal Good, and so most suitable to the Will. The Mind naturally seeks after Truth, proceeds from Effects to Causes without Rest, till it find the first Cause; the Will seeks after Good, but never rests till it finds the Chief Good; and therefore the Mind created in its Frame harmonizeth with the Mind uncreated; much more Grace, which is its healthful State, must harmonize with Glory. Inward holy Life comports with God, who is essential Life: Inward holy Light comports with essential Wisdom: Inward holy Love is con-natural to essential Goodness. If the Mind begotten in its Constitution correspond with the Mind that did beget, then much more in its Rectitude, must it harmonize therewith; consequently the heavenly Nature must conduce to the heavenly State. This consists not so much in the outward Glory of the Place, as in the inward State of our Minds, and Suitableness of our Tempers to heavenly Objects, in heavenly Actions flowing from heavenly Dispositions, whence arise heavenly Joys. The Beams of Divine Life and Love beget their like in the Soul; and therefore there must be an amazing Correspondence of sanctified Faculties with holy Objects; Grace consequently must harmonize with Glory. The same Objects, the same Faculties, the same Dispositions in the Faculties, the same Acts flowing from the same Dispositions, but all in Perfection. The same divine Life,
the

the same holy Love, the same spiritual Light, but perfected: Faith turn'd into Vision, Hope into Fruition, but Love remains in Perfection. By an heavenly Temper therefore, our Souls are attuned to the heavenly State. As the Life of Grace corresponds with the Life of Glory, so impress'd Glory harmonizeth with represented Glory. The former is call'd the Glory to be revealed in us; ^{Rom. 8. 18.} the latter the exceeding and eternal Weight of ^{2 Cor. 4. 17.} Glory. The Beamings forth of represented Glory impresseth such a divine Resemblance as corresponds therewith. The beatifying Vision of God assimilateth the whole Soul to God, by the Increase of Likeness to him, 'tis more dispos'd for the continued Vision of him, ^{1 Cor. 13. 12.} from both results the heavenly Beatitude. *In thy Presence is Fulness of Joy, and at thy right Hand are Pleasures for evermore.* As all Good eminently is in the Chief Good; so the Glory of the Blessed lies in the highest Fruition of the highest Good we are capable of. When the Perfected Soul shall interchangeably turn its intellectual Eye upon God and it self, and shall view the Harmony of impress'd Glory with represented Glory, its Joys will be ineffable, as resulting from such a divinely reciprocal Harmony. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; by beholding the Glory of the Lord, we shall be changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory. Here we see through a Glass darkly, there we shall see Face to Face; here we know in part, there we shall know as we are known: Here we know God by his Works, there we shall know his Works in him: Here we know Causes by

Effects, the supream by the suborninate, the universal by particular, there we shall know Effects in their Causes, the subordinate in the supream, the particular in the universal. All Effects of Power in Almightyness, all Harmony in essential Wisdom, all Good in the universal Goodness. Here we enjoy God in the Creature, there we shall enjoy the Creature in God. Here we tast uncreated Goodness in created Good, there we shall tast all created Goodness eminently in the uncreated and universal Good. For he that knows God in Glory knows all in God; and he that enjoys God in Glory, enjoys all in God. *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath entred into the Heart of Man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

Having traced the Wisdom of God up to Glory, there we must leave it, until we thro' Grace come there, better to understand it.

U S E I.

From what has been said concerning God's Wisdom in the Impetration and Application of Redemption, we may conclude what a curious Plat-form, what a Divine Project the Work of Salvation is. How excellently doth Christ's Offices harmonize with the Attributes of Power, Wisdom and Goodness? how do the Spirit's Operations comport with Christ's Offices? how do the Gospel and Ministry harmonize with both? and how admirably do all united correspond with our Apostacy? How does the Mind created in its natural Constitution, harmonize with the Mind uncreated? the moral Image with the natural,

natural, and both with their supream Original? Consequently inherent Grace with future Glory, and inward Glory with outward Glory. What a Concurrence of Causes coordinate and subordinate, and a reciprocal Harmony in both, is there in the actual Accomplishment of our Happiness? Some acting in Conjunction, others in Subserviency, and all in Dependance on the first Cause, *Infinite Grace*. Here is the Father's Mercy, the Son's Merit, the Spirit's Energy. The Father's Promise, the Son's Purchase, the Spirit's Performance. The Father's Love, the Son's Grace, and the Spirit's Work. And under these the Doctrine of the Gospel authoritatively published to cure Ignorance, the testamentary Gift authoritatively offer'd to remove Enmity; the Royal Demands of Consent declared to conquer Obstinacy. As in a curious Movement there's the greater and the lesser Wheels in Dependance on, and Subserviency to each other; and all in Dependance on the first Mover: so 'tis in Redemption; the Father's Wisdom, the Son's Prophetic Office, the Spirit's enlightning Agency, as Con-causes: The Doctrine of the Gospel, Ministerial Teachings, with Attendance thereon, as subordinate Means, meet suitably with the Sinner's Ignorance. The Father's Goodness, the Son's Priestly Office, the Spirit's sanctifying Agency, as Con-causes: The Testament of Grace, Ministerial Tenders, with the Sinner's Study thereon, as subordinate Means, meet suitably with his Enmity. The Father's Power, the Son's Kingly Office, the Spirit's quickening Agency,

cy, as Causes: The Law of Christ commanding Ministerial Demands of Consent in Christ's Name, with the Sinner's Harkening thereto, as subordinate Means, meet suitably with his Rebellion. Can Causes be more suitable to Effects? Can Means be more adapted to their Ends, or Motives more powerful to the industrious Use thereof? Is not Life suitable to remove Deadness? Light suitable to remove Darknes? Love suitable to remove Averseness? How admirably does the Trinity in Unity in the Instrument comport with Trinity in Unity in the Agent? and how wisely do both in Union co-operate to make us holy and happy? The Grace of the Father, the Merit of the Son, and Efficacy of the Spirit, as equal Causes; the Gospel and Ministry, with the Exercise of Man's reasonable Nature in the Use thereof, as subordinate Means do all concur ordinarily to produce one effect, SAVING GRACE. Here's the manifold Wisdom of God, the Wisdom of God in a Mystery, yea God's abounding in all Wisdom and Prudence. There is a universal Harmony in all the Parts of Redemption; nothing in its proper Place is destructively repugnant to the whole, or any Part. All the Divine Attributes are glorified; every Office of the Mediator is magnified, and Operation of the Spirit honoured. The several Parts of the Gospel and Ministry reverenc'd, Duty in all its Branches engaged, Salvation in a Way of Obedience secur'd, and the Father, Son and Spirit, in their Glory, as the End of all, acknowledg'd. There must be a Union of all Causes in their respective

Active Dependance and Subordination ordinarily, both in Temporals and Spirituall, in order to the Production of a proper Effect.

I will hear, I will hear, saith the Lord, the Heavens, and they shall hear the Earth, and the Earth shall hear the Corn, and the Wine, and the Oil, and they shall hear Jezreel. Bodies cannot subsist without proper Nourishment, this cannot be had but out of the Earth, the Earth cannot yield this but by Cultivation, this will not answer without the Influence of the Heavens, the Heavens cannot yield this without the Influence of the first Cause. We cannot ordinarily have Grace but by the Means of Grace, and these cannot convey Grace without the Spirit of Grace. We cannot be sav'd without Faith; Faith comes by Hearing, Hearing by the Word preach'd, and our Attendance thereon; and neither Hearing, nor Preaching, nor Attendance, can work Faith, without the Influence of the Spirit of Faith. The Means of Grace are so harmoniously connected, as that they all mutually depend on each other for their respective Actings; and all absolutely together on the Influence of the first Cause. The Revelation of God's Will infers the Duty of Reading; the Ministry to open it, infers the Duty of Hearing; the Lord's Day for more close Application, infers the Duty of Prayer and Dependance. The well proportion'd Distribution of the several Parts of Redemption secures the Glory of all to God, and yet leaves the Sinner without Ground of Complaint against God; renders the Compassions of God admirable, and his Government venerable; provides for the Honour

Hos. 2.
21, 22.

Honour of his Authority, without eclipsing the Lustre of his Mercy. The Wisdom of the several Parts, shews the Wisdom of the whole, and consequently the incomprehensible Depth of Wisdom in God.

Job. 35.
6. 7.

2. From the Consideration of God's Wisdom in the Application of Redemption, we conclude how well the Glory of Father, Son, and Spirit is advanc'd; and that a peculiar and distinct Honour is to be ascribed to each Person, according to their distinct Agency in Salvation. God's Essential Glory arises from all the Divine Perfections, as concentrated in the Divine Essence, and is incommunicable to any Creature. *If thou sinnest what dost thou against him? If thou be righteous what givest thou him, or what receiveth he at thy Hands?* Our Sight of the Sun cannot increase its Brightness, or our Blindness obscure its Splendor in it self, tho' it may intercept its Beams as to us. Our Sin cannot eclipse this Essential Glory, nor the Work of Redemption add thereto: but 'tis otherwise with respect to the Manifestative, Sin diminishes this so far as it rejects his Government, defaces his Holiness, and affronts his Majesty; and the very Platform of Redemption it self, the very Works of Father, Son, and Spirit, more publish, declare and manifest this, than all the Hosanna's of the Redeemed. As a curious Piece of Art more manifests the Ingenuity of the Artificer to a capable Subject, than all the Commendations of curious Observers. As God necessarily loves himself in himself, so he loves himself in his Works, and loves his Works so far as they resemble his own Excellencies.

lencies. Now where the Effects of his Attributes most shine, there the Glory of God most is. His Essence is every where, but his Glory is not equally every where, because the glorious Effects of his Attributes are not equal upon his Works; since there are more lively Impresses of his Attributes in the Work of Redemption, than Creation; it follows that he is more glorified by the former than the latter; by the Work it self, than by all our Praises. God is more glorified by Christ, Christ more glorified by his Works, and the Spirit more glorified by his Work on the Believer, than by all our Acclamations. His Justice more declared to be glorious by Christ's Sufferings, than by the eternal Ruin of the Sinner. His Holiness more publish'd as glorious by the Punishment of Sin on Christ's Body, than by all the fall'n Creatures Sufferings. Sin rendred more formidable by his Sacrifice, than by all the Torments of the Damned. The Divine Government rendred more venerable by the perfect Conformity of God-man in our Nature, than by all Man's Primitive Obedience. God's gracious Nature more declared to be glorious in the compassionate Temper and Practice of Christ, than by all the Praises of Men and Angels. As the Father was more glorified by the Works of Christ, so Christ was more glorified by the Works themselves which he did, than by all the Acknowledgments of the Redeemed. His Wisdom more declared by his Doctrine, his Goodness by his Testament, and his Power by his Miracles. The Spirit is more glorified by the healthful Effects

fects of his Agency, than by all our Hallelujah's. The Effects of his Attributes, the Communications of his Grace, and the Impressions of his imitable Nature, more publishes, declares, and manifests the Attributes of Wisdom, Justice, Holiness and Goodness, than all our Oral Acknowledgments. Whence it appears that the whole Trinity is more glorified by the Divine Works themselves, than by all our vocal Praises. But yet the Platform of Redemption is so fram'd, as to publish not only the Divine Excellency, but to secure an Acknowledgment thereof from reasonable Creatures, by Estimation, Expression, and Conversation. *Who so offereth Praise, glorifieth me.* We glorify God when we esteem and reverence him according to the Discoveries he has made of his Attributes. He is more glorified by his Works of Grace, than by our Acknowledgments; and more acknowledged to be glorious by our Conversation, than Expression. *Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much Fruit.* As he most glorifies himself by Communications from himself, so we must glorify him by Encrease of Likeness to him, and Enjoyment of him. When we do good for the sake of Goodness, act piously for the sake of Piety, and virtuously for the sake of Vertue, and justly for the sake of Justice, and charitably for the sake of Charity, we may with great Encouragement pray as Christ did, *Father, glorify thy Name; q. d. discover and make known thy self to be glorious, by communicating the Fruits of thy Grace and Goodness to us, that we may be enabled in Heart and Life,*

Psal. 50.
23.

John 15.
8.

to

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to publish thy Holiness, Righteousness, and Goodness to thy Honour and Praise.

Not only is the Glory of the Father, Son, and Spirit, advanc'd by the Divine Platform of Redemption, but a peculiar and distinct Honour is due to each Person according to their distinct Agency in Salvation. The Father contriv'd it, the Son transacted it, and the Spirit apply'd it. The Father electeth, the Son redeemeth, the Spirit sanctifieth. The Father appointed it, the Son acquir'd it, and the Spirit communicateth it. The Father orders the Work, the Son accomplisheth it according to Order, and the Spirit applies it orderly. The Father sent the Son, the Son sent the Spirit, by the Spirit we are brought into the Son, thro' the Son accepted by the Father; and therefore there is an harmonious Concurrence of Triune Divinity in the actual Salvation of a Sinner; and therefore an honourable Acknowledgment of the Father's Grace, the Son's Merit, and the Spirit's Energy from the Sinner, is wisely provided for in the Oeconomy of Redemption. That an Infinite Nature can communicate it self to three different Subsistencies, without such Division as is among created Beings, must be determined by the absolute Perfections of the Deity, which is to us incomprehensible. We must not therefore too critically distinguish betwixt the several Persons in their several Operations, considering the Simplicity of the Divine Essence; but yet since the Scripture does as certainly distinguish them in their Persons, as unite them in Nature, we are taught that a distinct Honour is due to each Per-

Person. Tho' God's gracious Design of our Recovery was absolutely voluntary, yet the Order of its Accomplishment seems necessary from the Order of Subsistencies in the Deity. The Father offended by Sin, sustains the Majesty of Creator and Judge: The Son acteth as Mediator betwixt God and the Sinner, by Intercession grounded on Satisfaction: The Spirit as the Agent of the Son begins and perfects the Work within, as the Son already has without. The Grace and Love design'd in the Counsel of the Father, and prepared by the Mediation of the Son, is apply'd actually to Souls by the Agency of the Spirit. The whole Trinity therefore has a distinct Agency in Redemption, and is to be honourably acknowledg'd by the Redeemed.

3dly. How reconcilable are those Truths which seem most opposite? Free Justification with Christ's Satisfaction; the Necessity of Holiness, with his Mediation; efficacious Grace, with the Exercise of Man's reasonable Nature; the Glory of God's absolute Efficiency in Salvation, with Man's subservient Industry to be saved; the Spirit's Glory in working, with the Sinner's Duty in attending; God's Willingness to save, with Man's Refusal to be saved; Free Grace the Spring of his Happiness, with himself being the Author of his Misery. Since the Father, thro' the Son, by the Spirit, is all in all, as to both Application and Impetration, the Glory and Honour of the Father's Grace, the Son's Merit, and Spirit's Energy are intirely secur'd, the Boasting of the fallen Creature excluded, the Merit of humane Works destroy'd, the

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Doctrine of Free Grace establish'd, and the Cause of one differing from another into God's Pleasure resolv'd. In this Sense we must say, *It is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shews Mercy.* If by Grace, then no more of Works, otherwise Grace is no more Grace. For by Grace are ye saved through Faith; and that not of our selves; it is the Gift of God. Who makes thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou hast not received? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou then glory as if thou hadst not receiv'd it? If the Faithful have no cause to boast as to Gifts of Superiour Judgment, then much less as to the Gifts of Saving Grace. Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompenc'd unto him again? Therefore all Christians must say, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. I labour'd more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the Grace of God which was with me. By the Grace of God I am what I am. **FREELY LOVED,** the Lord did not set his Love upon you, because ye were more in Number than others; but because he loved you. **FREELY CHOSEN,** chosen in Christ before the Foundation of the World. **FREELY ADOPTED,** Predestinated to the Adoption of Children by Christ, according to the good Pleasure of his Will. **FREELY JUSTIFIED:** Justified freely by his Grace. **FAITH FREELY GIVEN,** Unto you it is given to believe. **REPENTANCE FREELY GIVEN,** Christ exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance. **OBEDIENCE THE GIFT OF GOD,** I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes. **ETERNAL HAPPINESS THE FREE GIFT OF GOD.** 'Tis your Father's good Pleasure to give you the Kingdom.

Rom. 9.
16.

Rom. 11.

6.

Eph. 2. 8.

1 Cor. 4.

7.

Rom. 11.

35.

Gal. 2. 10.

1 Cor. 15.

10.

Eph. 2. 8.

Rom. 3.

24.

Phil. 1.

24.

Since

Since the Fruits of Grace are dispens'd from the Father, thro' the Son, by the Spirit, consistently with the Honour and Use of Gospel Ministrations, and the Exercise of Man's Essential Faculties, the Word and Ministry in their due Subordination are establish'd, and the Sinners Attendance thereon for Grace enforc'd, Slothfulness is prevented, Industry encourag'd, and Negligence condemn'd. The Sinner for his careless Neglects is rendred speechless, and Justice in his Ruin blameless; Thought and Care about our Happiness exercis'd, Reverence and Caution excited, groundless Security and Fear discountenanc'd, and Hope in a way of Diligence encouraged, the Glory of special Grace maintain'd, the Honour of Christ's Suretiship defended, and yet all Ground of Complaint against God prevented. In this Sense they are exhorted to make them *a new Heart, and a new Spirit, to turn themselves and live, to awake from the Dead, that Christ may give them Life, to strive to enter in at the Strait Gate, to labour for the Meat that endures to eternal Life, to improve their present Talents, to give Diligence to make their Calling and Election sure; but for all this they will not frame their Doings to turn to the Lord, for the Spirit of Whoredom is in them, they will not come to Christ that they may have Life; Christ would gather them and they would not; Their Eyes have they closed, lest at any time they see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and be converted, and I should heal them. They refus'd to hearken, pull'd away their Shoulder, stopp'd their Ears, that they should not hear, yea, they made their Hearts as*

Mat. 18.
15.

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an Adamant, lest they should hear the Law, there-^{Zech. 7.}
fore it is come to pass, that as he cried and they^{11, 12,}
would not hear, so they cried and I would not hear,^{13.}
saith the Lord of Hosts : So equitable are God's
Proceeding in this Case, that he submits them
to human Determination. What could have^{Isa. 5. 4,}
been done more to my Vineyard that I have not^{5.}
done to it. Whence it appears that his own Ini-^{Prov. 5.}
quity shall take the Wicked himself, and he shall be^{22.}
holden with the Cords of his Sin. Thy Ways
and thy Doings have procur'd these things^{Jer. 17.}
unto thee, this is thy Wickedness; hast thou^{22.}
not procur'd this to thy self, in that thou
hast forsaken the Lord thy God. Thy own^{Ver. 19.}
Wickedness shall correct thee, thy Backslidings
shall reprove thee; know therefore and see that it
is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken
the Lord thy God. O Israel, thou hast destroy'd^{Hos. 13.}
thy self. In short, since God dispenses his^{9.}
Gifts and Graces thro' his Son, by his Spirit,
consistently with the Honour of Wisdom or-
dering, and Authority ordaining, the Subor-
dination of Ordinances, and the diligent Use
thereof; it follows, that his Spirit's Influences
are suitable and consistent with the Glory of
his Mercy. Gospel Ministrations are not to be
undervalued, nor careful Attendance thereon
neglected, for Conversion is wrought ordina-
rily in such a wise Order as both upholds the
Honour of Grace, and exerciseth the Sinner's
industrious Thoughts about his Happiness.
Hence Mercy is magnified in all that are sa-
ved; and Justice vindicated in all that are
damned: The Sinner's wilful Refusal of
Grace is impleaded; and he for his obstinate
Neglects, self-condemn'd: the Equity of God's

65 *A Discourse of God's Wisdom.*

Proceedings justified ; and Man's wilful Contempt of Mercy charg'd : He is made speechless in being his own Self-murderer, by a wilful Neglect of the subordinate Means, wherein the Spirit exerts his Power.

4^{thly}. Then a clear distinct View of the Consistency of all the Parts of Redemption one with another, in their proper Place and Order, is a good Means to discover and preserve from erroneous Extrems on all Hands. Some are for Free Grace without Christ's Satisfaction : Some for Christ's Satisfaction without special Grace in the Application : Some for the Spirit's Office without the Word and Ministry : Some for Ordinances too much in the Room of the Spirit : Some for Free Grace, Christ's Blood, and the Spirit's Efficacy in Opposition to the Law and Duty : and Some for the latter, in the too much Neglect of a due Reliance on the former. Now the Doctrine of WISE GRACE rightly understood, discovers many Errors about the Doctrine of FREE GRACE. Some are for the Attribute of Goodness, without a due Regard to the Honour of Wisdom, and Power. Some exalt Grace to the Prejudice of Holiness, and magnify Mercy to the enervating of Authority. Now a due Consideration of the Wisdom of Grace would teach us what Conceptions to form of the Gospel of Grace, what Dispositions comport with these Conceptions, and what kind of Practice is suitable to both. 'Tis Grace that in the Altitude of its Freeness does not prejudice any one Attribute, but is consistent with the Glory of all. Therefore we must admire Grace with a Reverence

verence of Holiness; adore Mercy, but tremble at his Majesty; be asham'd of our Enmity, but thankful for his Indulgence; own the Rights of Justice, and subscribe to the Demands of Government. We must not under pretence of exalting Mercy dishonour Justice; nor under a pretence of honouring Justice eclipse Mercy. God's Compassion in Redemption, does not make void God's Right by Creation. The after Discovery of Grace, does not disannul the former Claims of Majesty. Christ does not mediate to change God, but that a Change may be made in us; not to make God better, but us better; not him more gracious, but us more meet for the Fruits of Grace.

Some are for Christ's Priestly Office, without a due Regard to the Glory of his Prophecy and Kingdom. Now a due Consideration of the WISDOM of GRACE might teach us, what Conceptions to form of the Honour of his Priesthood, what Dispositions comport with those Conceptions, and what a Practice is agreeable to both. One Branch of the Mediatorial Office must not be separated from, or oppos'd to the other. Is Christ divided? His Blood-shed must not be oppos'd to his Doctrine, nor both to his Government; his being an Head of Dominion, must not be separated from his being an Head of vital Influence; his Righteousness must not be divided from his Example. We must be taught by him as Prophet, and rul'd by him as King, in a way of absolute Reliance on him as Priest; and therefore he is exalted, when he is practically own'd as authoriz'd, not only

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by Dependance on his Righteousness, but by Conformity to his Pattern; by Reverence of his Authority, and Submission to his Instruction. *He will be the Author of Salvation to them that obey him.* We need all his Offices, could not be saved with the Loss of any of them, and therefore must so value his precious Blood, as to reverence his Doctrine as Prophet, and Example as King. Our Blindness needs his Prophetick Light, our Deadness his Kingly Power, as well as our Accursedness his Priestly Merit. He must therefore be receiv'd penitently and thankfully, as authoriz'd to save from the Devil, World, and corrupt Nature, with a turning from these by consent of Will, renouncing them in Purpose, Desire, Resolution and Endeavour.

Some are for the Spirit as a Comforter, without a due Regard to him as a Sanctifier. Some for him as a Sanctifier, without a due Regard to the Word and Ministry by which he sanctifieth. A due Consideration of the WISDOM OF GRACE might teach us what Ideas to form of the Spirit's Honour, and what a Temper and Carriage is agreeable thereto. The Spirit's Office must not be set against Gospel Institutions; nor these against, or in Equality with the Spirit. *Tho' we are born not of the Will of the Flesh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God; yet of his own good Will begat he us with the Word of Truth:* A subordinate Cause in Being and Operation must not be oppos'd to the Supream; neither does the Efficacy ascribed to the Instrument, derogate from, but include the Honour of the Agent.

gent. Diligence therefore to get Grace, in Subserviency to the Spirit of Grace, does not eclipse the Glory of his Offices; but presuppose its Necessity, and the Honour due thereto. Ordinances are not to be set against, or in Equality with, but under Influence of the God of Ordinances. The Sinner's industrious Use thereof is the best way to express his Sense of Weakness in himself, his Reverence of the Spirit, and Dependance on his Help. Indulg'd Slothfulness therefore in Reading and Hearing and Prayer (under a pretence of exalting Grace) is a wilful Dishonour to the Spirit's Office, pernicious to Souls, and a daring Contempt of Gospel Grace. We must not therefore villify the Ministry, under a pretence of exalting Christ; nor neglect fiducial Dependance on Christ, under a pretence of our industrious Attendance on the Ministry. Prize his Office with a Submission to the Word and Ordinances, a Consent thereto includes a Consent to the Word indited by him, as the Rule of Faith and Practice, and a Consent to the Society of the Faithful sanctified by the Spirit. To deny his Office is to deny the Scriptures, our Baptism, the Necessity of Holiness, and an Article of the Christian Faith. 'Tis not Trust, but Presumption, to expect Help in a way contrary to his Appointment. To be sanctified ordinarily without the Word; or that the Word without the Spirit should, or either without our Attendance thereon. The greatest Industry therefore is consistent with the Glory of his Office, the way to express our Reverence of his Power, and Dependance on his Help. Hearing,

Reading,

Reading, and Prayer are Means, and therefore not to be undervalu'd: They are but Means, and therefore not to be overvalu'd. We must not therefore advance the Office of the Spirit to the subverting of Gospel Ministrations, by which he executes his Office. In short, plain Truth must not be accounted Error so often as our weak Intellect is puzzled to rank it in its proper place. The Existence of positive Entities must not be deny'd, so often as the Mode of Operation cannot be comprehended. A due Consideration of the Wisdom of Grace, would teach us what Conceptions to form of the Glory of the Spirit's Office; the best way to express our Sense of the Necessity of his Help; and Dependance thereon: It would shew what Dispositions comport with these Conceptions, and what a Practice is agreeable to both. Subordinates must not be made Co-ordinates or Opposites. As there is an amazing Union of Causes, supream and subordinate, in the actual Salvation of a Sinner; so this Salvation is sometimes ascrib'd to one, sometimes to another, under very different Considerations. Sometimes it is ascrib'd to Grace, *by Grace are ye saved.* Sometimes to Christ, *Christ came into the World to save.* Sometimes to the Spirit, *Saved by the renewing of the Holy Ghost.* Sometimes to the Word, *The engrafted Word which is able to save.* Sometimes to the Ministry, *In so doing thou shalt save thy self and them that hear thee.* Sometimes to Faith, *Thy Faith hath saved thee.* Sometimes to Sacraments, *Baptism saves.*

A Concurrence of many things according to God's establish'd Order, is necessary to bring

bring Man into a State of Salvation. God's Grace, as the inward moving Cause; Christ's Merit, as the outward impulsive Cause; the Spirit, as the immediate Efficient; the Gospel Covenant, as the Instrumental Conveyance; Faith in Christ, as the ordain'd Disposition of the Subject; the Word: and Ministry with the Sinner's Attendance, as Means to beget Faith; the Sacraments, to seal the Covenant, upon Faith's being wrought in the aforesaid Order. To every one of these in their proper place and kind, does the Scripture sometimes ascribe Salvation.

The Doctrine of WISE GRACE, rightly understood, would keep us from making Subordinates, Opposites, or Co-ordinates. We must not reflect upon Holiness, under pretence of exalting Christ; because 'tis Christ's Work to restore it, and God is glorify'd by it. We must not under a pretence of glorifying God by Holiness, condemn Faith in a Mediator; because 'tis the Means and Root thereof: for this would be to attain the End without the Means, or condemn the Means in order to attain the End. This would be to dream of Cure without the Physician of Souls, or that the Physician should cure without the Application of Means, or we be cur'd without the Means of Application, because without Faith we cannot have Holiness. We must not set Gospel Ministrations in Co-ordination with the Spirit, or the Spirit's Office in Opposition to the Gospel and Ministry. 'Tis pernicious in Judgment and Practice to make Co-ordinates, or Opposites Subordinates.

sibly. From the Consideration of Divine Wisdom in the Application of Redemption, we infer the Reasonableness of Submission to God's wise Methods of Grace to qualify for Glory. To inforce which,

I. Consider the Soul's Immortality; or what Eternal Beings you carry within you; with the natural Proofs of the great Objects of Faith legible in the Frame of your own Souls, of a God, of Judgment, of Heaven and Hell, of the Necessity of Religion, and Divine Revelation. We best know our Souls by their Operations, and the Nature of them by the Nature of their Operations; and consequently that there is a First and Universal Soul that made them. The Acts tell us what the Faculties are, and so what their Substance is; we Think, therefore have a Thinking Faculty, and consequently a Thinking Somewhat. That which has a Capacity of Knowing the Difference betwixt Truth and Falshood, Right and Wrong, betwixt Time and Eternity, this World and the other, must be superiour to Matter. That which can act within it self abstracted from Matter; can unite all the Perceptions of the several Senses; can, with a Power above Sense, correct its Mistakes; controul the Phantasie and Appetite; doubt and review its Doubts; conceive of Number without Magnitude; recollect things past; foresee things to come; infer Causes from Effects, the supream from the subordinate, and so gather satisfactory Conclusions of the certain Being of Things beyond Sense; must certainly be essentially distinct from the Body, and in its Nature capable

pable of and designed for Subsistence in another State. 'Tis impossible it should in its own Nature be dissolv'd with the Body, for where there is no Matter there can be no Parts of Matter, nor Separation of those Parts, and therefore no Dissolution, but a natural Aptitude to survive the Body. 'Tis unreasonable to suppose the wise God should make a Creature with a Capacity of knowing him, its Relation to him, and the resulting Duty thereof, should give it a Prospect of future Happiness, with a restless Tendency thereto, and after all reduce it to nothing. God who has fitted the Soul with Faculties for the Attainment of noble Ends, does therein declare such Ends are to be attain'd. His Will is learnt by his Works as well as his Word. The Fitness thereof for such Uses and Ends is a natural Proof of the Attainableness thereof. 'Tis self-evident we cannot be bound to labour after what has no certain Existence, or real Being in Nature; after what we are fundamentally incapable of, and ne'er design'd for; if so, Man's highest Duty would be Deceit, the World govern'd by Falshood, the best most deluded, and strict Subjection our final Ruin. Our Capacity and Duty therefore to mind future Happiness, is a natural Proof of its certain Being, as well as our own Immortality. An Effect proves a Cause; the Creature a Creator, and particular Minds an universal. Therefore 'tis most certain, all Men carry within them a natural Evidence of Deity, for there cannot be more in the Effects than in the Cause, and therefore nothing can be the Cause of Soul but Soul,

Soul, of Understanding but Understanding; we may as well suppose one Contrary is the Cause of another, Darkness the Cause of Light, Water of Fire, as that the Particles of Matter howsoever modified should think, deliberate, choose and resolve. A spiritual Nature cannot come but from the Father of Spirits. Created Minds derive their Being from the uncreated Mind. Nothing can give what it hath not, and therefore if God was not eminently a Spirit, there could be no created Spirits. Our Conception of Understanding we find within, points at something that is total Understanding, our Activity of Thought proves a Being able to do more than we can think. Our boundless Thirst after Content, proves a boundless Good that can content it. We are sure therefore, from our Souls and their Actings, there must be a first Being of infinite Power, Wisdom and Goodness, that made them, who must be more to the whole Universe than our Souls to our Bodies; for if there were as many Worlds as there are already Souls in the World, and these filled with rational Souls, one God would be enough for them all. As the Capacity of our Souls for an eternal Duration proves the divine Will to perpetuate them, so it proves a future State in which they must be perpetuated. The Independency of her Acts, as in Self-Reflection, proves the Independency of her Subsistence from the Body, and therefore that there must be some State in which she must subsist, consequently every Man carries within him a natural Evidence of an Heaven and Hell; if the Soul must for ever be in being,

ing, it must be in being somewhere. Her natural Sense of Right and Wrong proves a natural Law, that proves a Law-giver, and both a Dooms-day. The natural Subordination of a Creature to its Creator, is a legible Proof of future Judgment. He is our Sovereign, we his Subjects; our Master, we his Servants; from mutual Relations arise answerable Duties, which would be all bootless, and delusory, if we were not accountable for Performance or Neglects, and accordingly rewarded or punished. Therefore Man carrieth within him a natural Evidence of a God, and his Attributes, of Judgment, Heaven and Hell: and therefore God's Government of Man in this State, without the immediate Sight of the great Objects of Faith, is agreeable to the rational Nature; the contrary would overthrow the Nature of a State of Tryal, as well as over-set the Frailty of humane Nature. If we are Men, we have Reason; if we have Reason, we have higher Light to see by than Sense: if we have higher Light to see by than Sense, we may by reaching beyond the Bounds thereof, be infallibly assured by natural Evidence, of a God, Heaven, Hell and Judgment, tho' at present invisible to Sense. What tho' the Soul was ne're out of the Body immediately to behold the Objects of Faith; and tho' the Knowledge of them cannot enter our Minds by the Way of our Senses, yet it may enter by Reason; and is not the Soul more excellent than the Body, or is our Certainty of its Operations less than the Actings of our Senses? Can we not be assur'd by Reasoning we do Reason, as by Living we
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are alive! Is not Evidence of Reason as credible as Sense, in that Reason excelleth Sense; and is not Evidence of Faith and Reason more credible still? Can we not discover the Truth of invisible Realities by discovering their natural Proofs? And is it not most reasonable upon this Discernment to act according to the Importance of future Happiness and Misery, though invisible to Sense? from all which we may see a Necessity of Religion in the World, of our Submission to God's Methods of Grace, of our subserving the Spirit's Influences, of exercising our Consideration and Industry, about our Happiness.

Must we live for ever, and should we not please him that can make happy or miserable for ever? Open your Eyes, look about you, act like Men, consult better, choose better, live better, depend on his Goodness, resign all to his Sovereignty, thankfully receive his Benefits, adore his Excellencies, reverence his Authority, and submit to his Government. Since we carry within us natural Evidences of invisible Realities, it must needs follow that Revelation is necessary. Tho' we have such Grounds in Nature as may establish us in the Belief of our own Immortality, of God, of Judgment, Heaven and Hell, yet as to the Rise of God's Displeasure with Mankind, Reconciliation by an incarnate Deity, and the Way of acceptable Worship in this State, the Light of Nature cannot inform or direct us. We must know wherein the Chief Good consists, the Way to its Enjoyment, the Misery we are plunged into, with the Means of
our

our Escape, before we can attain the supream End of Life, and therefore Revelation is necessary. How can it stand with our best Ideas of perfect Goodness, and its Government of the Reasonable World, that Man should be without a sufficient Directory of Faith and Worship sufficiently made known. Now is it impossible that God should reveal his Will credibly to Mankind, with sufficient Evidence in this State of Apostacy? Where then is his Omnipotency? If he cannot reveal it in a Way agreeable to our present State, so that we may be infallibly assur'd that it is his Will, what would become of his Veracity? Can mortal Man tell his Mind, by speaking so as that none present shall be able to doubt thereof, and is not God the Creator able to do more? Tho' we cannot immediately see our own Souls, yet we can communicate our Sentiments, with sufficient Evidence thereof, to our fellow-Creatures; tho' we cannot immediately see God's Essence, yet he can so reveal his Will as to beget in us a rational undoubted Certainty of his Revelation. 'Tis most certain he can in some suitable Way with sufficient Proofs make known a Directory of Faith and Worship, so as to assure us of its Author and Original. Is not the concurring Testimony of so many Thousands as were about the Mount in the Days of *Moses*, or as were Eye-witnesses of Christ's Doctrine and Miracles plainly impossible to be false. If all Mankind on Earth, in the Days of *Moses*, had been present at the Mount with the *Israelites*, or if all Mankind upon this Globe, in the Days of Christ and his Apostles, had been

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Spectators of the Miracles with the Primitive Christians, yet how must the next Age come to the Knowledge thereof but by credible Report well attested? Is not their Testimony the only natural Medium to convey the Account of these Things from their Senses to our Understandings at this Distance. And is not this as satisfactory as if we had been then in being, to have seen and heard all? yea more satisfactory to a particular Person at this Distance than if he had been a single Eye-Witness; for nothing in Nature can produce an universal Testimony among Persons of all Interests, Tempers and Principles, but the Truth and Being of the Thing asserted; and there are Reasons enough in Nature to have produced a Contradiction in the Time and Place where the Things were said to be done, if they had been false. Besides the heavenly Nature of the Doctrine, its Excellency above all others, its Suitableness to natural Light, and our State of Apostacy, the Multitude of uncontrollable Miracles, the Deluge of Blood with which it was seal'd, its mighty Progress against all Opposition, the Correspondency of Events with circumstantial Predictions, as the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, the Subversion of the Community, the constant Succession of Christians, the Rejection of the Gospel by the *Jews*, and God's remaining Curse upon them, the holy Effects of the Doctrine on human Souls, and the Correspondence of these Effects with the Nature of the Doctrine, are a standing Proof of the Original. As from an Effect we are assur'd of a Cause, and from the Nature of an Effect, of the Nature of

of the Cause, so from the good and holy Effects of the Doctrine of the Gospel on Souls, we are assur'd of its holy Nature and Original. Furthermore, there are so many things fall under the Observation of Sense, as may confirm us in the Belief of the Scriptures; the Degeneracy of Mankind we see facilitates our Belief of the Account the Word gives us of *Adam's Fall*: The universal Contest betwixt Good and Bad, springing from implacable Enmity, proves the Truth of the first Gospel; *I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, between thy Seed and her Seed*: The Agreeableness of the Gospel to the best of Mens Tempers, and the Harmony of the regenerate Nature in all Christians therewith, and Suitableness of the heavenly Temper to the heavenly Life, does establish Christians in the Belief of Christianity. Can we doubt whether that Doctrine be from Heaven, that hath been blest to fit Souls for Heaven? Oh therefore study this Gospel, 'tis a most sure Word of Prophecy: read it attentively, hear it reverently, and meditate on it constantly. Attend on its Ordinances, believe them to be Means of Grace, depend intirely on the Spirit of Grace, pray earnestly for his special Agency to make them successful. God has in these last Days spoken to us by his Son; see then that ye refuse not him that speaketh, for if ye hear not *Moses* and the Prophets, neither will ye be perswaded, *tho' one rose from the Dead*. No higher Truths, no stronger Evidence, no fitter Means, no higher Motives, can be reveal'd by one from the Dead than by the Gospel.

adly.

2dly. To inforce your Submission to God's wise Methods of Grace, to fit you for Glory; consider, diligently consider, the universal Defilement and Misery of the fallen human Nature. God made Man upright, but they sought out many Inventions. We all like *Adam* have transgress'd the Covenant, and therefore all have sinn'd and fallen short of the Glory of God. There is none righteous, no not one. *We were shapen in Iniquity, and in Sin did our Mothers conceive us.* The Fountain being infected, the Streams cannot be pure, for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? *That which is born of the Flesh is Flesh.* Therefore our Minds are ignorant, our Wills perverse, our Consciences benum'd, and Affections disorder'd. *Every Imagination of Man's Heart is evil continually.* The natural Man understands not the Things of God. The carnal Mind is Enmity against God; They that are in the Flesh cannot please God. Void of Good, full of Evil. The Master-piece of the Creation is shatter'd, the Primitive Order perverted, and the Subserviency in the human Nature disturbed. The Creator deposed below the Creature, and the Creature advanced in his Place. God dethron'd in the Esteem, Choice, and Delight of the Sinner, and carnal Self enthron'd in his Room. Oh sad Apostacy! Ah lamentable Degeneracy! Oh cursed Idolatry! God's universal Right is disclaim'd, the Government of our selves usurped, and brutish Lusts obeyed. Our Conceptions are clouded, and a just Sense of our Dignity is decay'd. The Soul's rightful Dominion over the Body

is invaded, its Supremacy over the Phantasy and Appetite assaulted, and their Subjection to the Will guided by Reason forfeited. The Dictates of Reason are contradicted, the Will's Command over the subordinate Faculties slighted. The Understanding is darkened, the Will is depraved, and the whole Soul is infected. The Phantasy is wicked and tyrannical, the Appetite violent and raging, the Passions tumultuous and irregular, and the whole Practice erroneous and damnable. The Head where the Feet should be, and the Feet where the Eyes were; Servants ride on Horse-back, and Princes walk on Foot; govern'd by Phantasy more than Judgment, by Appetite more than Will, by Earth more than Heaven, by Time more than Eternity, and therefore rul'd more by brutish Inclinations, than rational Dictates. How deplorable is the Human Nature, sunk from its primitive Subordination to God and it self? What monstrous Deformity is there in the Nature of Sin! What barbarous Cruelty in Rebellion! What cursed Bondage are we in! Rebels to God, Slaves to Devilism. *The Crown is fallen from our Heads, wo to us, for we have sinned.* This is my Condition and yours by Nature. Your Disbelief does not make it better than as now described, for we are all Transgressors from the Womb: We go astray as soon as we are born; and therefore by Nature we must certainly be Children of Wrath, under a dreadful Sentence of Condemnation, for all the World is become guilty before God, *and he that believes not is condemned already, because he be-*

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believes not: For by the Offence of one Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation. Therefore there is a Necessary of healing Means, and our diligent Use thereof, of the sanctifying Agency of the Spirit, of our earnest Prayer for his Help, of our Submission to God's wise Methods of Grace in Dependence on him for renewing Influences.

3dly. Consider therefore the Universal Suitableness of the Mediator as authoriz'd to recover us from this Defilement and Misery of the human Nature. Christ is God-man in one, in order to make God and Man one. Man would be as God, and that destroy'd him; God will be as Man in order to recover him. Heaven and Earth have contracted, as a Proof of Earth's Return to Heaven. The Divinity is espous'd to Humanity, as an Earnest of our Re-espousal to God in Christ. The amicable Accord betwixt the two Natures by the Hypostatic Union, exemplifieth a Correspondence to be settled betwixt God and Man, and shews that God by Christ is become accessible, is inclined to be reconcilable, Approaches to him may be comfortable, and a Fitness for that Converse attainable in this embodied State. Is not the Junction of the God-head and Man-hood in the Person of the Mediator, the greatest Ground to assure us of Reconciliation betwixt God and fallen Sinners? Does it not universally qualify him to reconcile God to Man, and Man to God, by recovering us from our Filth and Guilt unto our Subordination to God and our selves? Is he not here-upon universally suitable to reveal Salvation,

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to cure our Ignorance by the Light of his Doctrine as Prophet? To acquire Salvation for us, to overcome our Enmity by the Merit of his Bloodshed as Priest? To apply reveal'd and acquir'd Salvation to us by the Efficacy of his Power as King? Does not his Offices imply our miserable Necessity? Are they not calculated to our happy Recovery? If our Wound was curable by any created Power, what need would there be of God-man so authoriz'd to be our Physician? We have all catch'd a dreadful Contagion, by the Apostacy of our first Parents, and nothing but a Potion confect of the Blood of God's own Son can heal us. Behold me, behold me, saith Christ, *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you Rest.* Come buy of me Gold tried in the Fire that thou mayest be rich, white Raiment to cover thee with, that the Shame of thy Nakedness do not appear, and ancient thine Eyes with Eye-Salve that thou may'st see. Poor Captives, behold your Redeemer! Lost Souls, behold your Saviour! Ignorant Souls, behold your Teacher! Guilty Souls, behold your Advocate! Diseased Souls, behold your Physician! Come flee to your City of Refuge; venture all upon him, surrender all to him, expect only to be restor'd to your Subordination to God and your selves in him, and by him. Believe him to be such an One as the Gospel declares him to be: Consent to him as such an one for your selves, resign all into his Hands, depend on his All-sufficiency to do his undertaken Work. Follow his Conduct, conform to his Pattern. Use

the Means of his Prescription, and you most certainly will find he is mighty to save, able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God by him.

4^{thly}. To inforce your Submission to God's wise Methods of Grace, in order to be impower'd to comply with Christ as authoriz'd, that you may be restor'd to Happiness in God, Conformity to God, and Acquaintance with God, consider the engaging Invitations of the Gospel; God has without asking your Consent provided a Saviour, and therein a Sacrifice, establish'd a Covenant, and the Terms of Peace, prepared suitable Blessings, ordained subservient Means, commanded our Use thereof in Dependence on his Spirit, has authoriz'd his Ambassadors to treat, by them does offer the Blessings of the Covenant on the Terms thereof to induce your Compliance, does enter his Claim to your Persons and Services, and demands an Acknowledgment of his Right, and upon your penitent Consent impower them in his Name and Stead, to Sign and Seal the Covenant betwixt him and you. All things are ready, come to the Marriage. God the offended Sovereign makes the first Motions of a Peace, offers Heaven to your Choice to encourage your Hopes, threatens Hell as the Punishment of your Refusal to awaken your Fears, and by all declares his Willingness to have the Breach composed, the Difference made up, a Peace concluded, and a Union of Friendship accomplished. *God was in Christ, reconciling the World to himself, not imputing their Trespasses, and hath committed to us the Ministry of Reconciliation.*

2 Cor. 5.
18, 19.

Now

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Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, who does beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be you reconciled. *Whofo is simple let him turn in hither, forsake the Foolish* Prov. 9. *and live, and go in the way of Understanding.* 1, 2, 3, 4, 6. What God in Christ has prepared for you, and the Gospel offers to you, that are you bound upon Pain of highest Displeasure to accept. Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters, and he that hath no Money; come buy Wine 2, 3. and Milk without Price and Cost: Wherefore spend ye your Money for that which is not Bread, and your Labour for that which satisfieth not; hearken diligently, incline your Ear, and come unto me, hear and your Souls shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you. In the last Day, John 7. that great Day of the Feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any Man thirst let him come unto me and drink. Whosoever will let him take the Rev. 22. Water of Life freely. The Spirit and the Bride 17. say, come, and let him that heareth say, come, and let him that is a thirst come. The Spirit in the Bride, and the Bride by the Spirit, invite to Grace as the Way to Glory. Repentance, and Remission of Sin must be preach'd Luke 24. unto all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem. The 47. Crucifiers of Christ must have the first Offer of Pardon in the Blood of Christ. Amazing Riches of Grace! that the Efficacy of Christ's Blood should wash away the Guilt of his Blood. The chiefest of Sinners have, and still may upon sound Repentance find Mercy. A persecuting Paul, an extorting Zaccheus, an idolatrous Manasseh, an unclean Magdalen, an adulterous David, a perjured backsliding Peter. Christ came into the World to save Sinners,

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Rev. 3.
20.

ners, saith Paul, whereof I am chief. How meltingly does he expostulate? How compassionately does he entreat? How pathetically does he solicit. *As I live, saith the Lord, I have no Pleasure in the Death of the Wicked. Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die. Behold I stand at the Door and knock, if any Man hear my Voice and open the Door, I will come and sup with him, and be with me.* Here's gracious Condescension, tender Love, and patient waiting on Sinners. Who is it that does invite? The Brightness of his Father's Glory, the King of Kings, the intellectual Wisdom of the Father, one that thought it no Robbery to be equal with God, one that hath no need of you, that could force his Glory out of you, Your offended Sovereign, your Judge, and yet the Desire of all Nations, one Fairer than the Sons of Men, the chiefest amongst ten thousand, altogether lovely. This is he that doth invite, intreat, and wait to be gracious.

Who are you that are thus invited? Sinners, self-destroy'd Sinners, inveterate Enemies, stubborn Rebels, in a State of Maliginity, in the High-way to endless Misery, mortal, dying, accountable Sinners, such as don't desire Mercy and Grace, for they run away from the Means thereof, and from God the End thereof. Such as don't deserve it, for they have dismally provoked God, and continue so to do. Such as can never regain it, for we have nothing but what we receive, and who has first given to him. What doth he invite you from, but from Self, Destruction and the Cause thereof? From an Hel-

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lish Nature within, and from an Hell without, from the cursed Society of infernal Spirits, from a Course of Impiety and Vice as the way to Misery, from hurting and wronging your selves by sinning against him. Unto what does he invite you? Unto himself as the authoriz'd Mediator, and through himself unto the Love of the Universal Good, to the Knowledge of him, Likeness to him, Converse with him, and final Happiness in him. To his Spirit as your Sanctifier, to his Conduct and Help, to his Word as your Guide, to his Church as your Society, to Piety and Vertue as the way to Glory, to the diligent Use of God's Ordinances, as the Means of Holiness, to make us meet for Happiness. What gracious Promises of Acceptance does he make upon your Return? *Turn ye at my Reproof, Behold I will pour out my Spirit upon you, I will make known my Words unto you.* Prov. 1. I Rev. 21. *will give to him that is a thirst of the Fountain of the Water of Life freely: I will pour Water on him that is thirsty, and Floods on the dry Ground. He that comes unto me I will in no wise cast out.* Isa. 44. 3. John 6. 37. How ready to hear the Cries of Penitents, how forward to grant their Requests, how inclin'd to lend an Ear to their Groans: *Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear: I said I will confess my Transgressions, and thou forgavest me the Iniquity of my Sin.* Isa. 65. 24. Psal. 32. 5. The Father of the Prodigal saw him when he was a great way off, and no wonder since God saith, *I am sought of them that asked not for me, I am found of them that sought me not, I said, behold me, behold me.* Isa. 65. 1, 2. I have spread out my Hands all the Day unto

a rebellious People. How does he threaten your Denial? See that you refuse not him that speaketh. How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation? Of how much sorer Punishment shall they be thought worthy, that have trampled under foot Christ Jesus? It will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, in the Day of Judgment, than for such. How does he bewail your Refusal? O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy Children, but ye would not? O that my People had hearken'd to me, O that they were wise, that they would consider this!

Mat. 23.
37.
Psal. 87.
13.
Hos. 11.8.

How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel?

5thly. Consider that a rational Love of your selves is necessary, and con-natural; an indispensable Duty by the Law of God and Nature. All Methods of Divine Government, all the Laws of God, the Terms of Salvation, and subordinate Means of Grace do presuppose it, and are calculated to it. As Man consists of Soul and Body, so there is a two-fold Love of Self, essential to him: A necessary Love of sensitive Self, and a necessary Love of rational Self: The former common to Men and Beasts; the latter common to Men and Angels: The former a natural Bias to what Sense represents as good; the latter a natural Bias to what Reason represents as good: Both indelibly implanted in human Nature, and as inseparable from it as Gravitation in heavy Bodies: The former stronger to a Man's self than all the World: We can feel our personal Good or Evil more than others; our Hunger, Thirst, Sickness, Want, Joy, or Delight in it self, but not anothers.

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another. *The Heart knows its own Bitterness,* Prov. 14.
but a Stranger does not intermeddle with its Joys. 10.

Skin for Skin, and all that a Man hath, will he give for his Life. The latter is a necessary Love of our selves, so far as Good is in Subordination to God; and as having a fundamental Capacity for Grace and Glory.

Without this, what room would there be for Rewards or Punishments; for Promises and Threats, for Happiness or Misery? Without this there would be no Place for Ministerial Pleadings, for Discourses of the Supream Good, and the Means to attain it. Without this we should not be capable of Moral Government, not capable to receive Instructions; to fear Punishment, to hope for Rewards, and as mov'd hereby to perform Duty. How consonant hereto are God's wise Methods of Grace, the Terms of Life, and God's Love as a Directory of Practice. All that is dangerous, hurtful and destructive to our Safety is forbidden; all that is good, advantageous and profitable is requir'd; therefore Interest and Personal Security should move us to Duty. All God's Statutes and Ordinances are Acts of Kindness and Mercy respecting our Advantage and Happiness, as well as of Authority respecting his Honour and Glory, and therefore it would be for the Calamity, Misery and Torment of Mankind, if what is forbidden were a Duty, or what is requir'd abrogated. If thou be wise, therefore be wise for thy self. What does the Lord thy God require of thee, but to keep all his Commandments for thy Good. How reasonable and good is it, that Man, who naturally

rally and necessarily loves his Safety, should be bound to use the proper Means thereof, and use them with his utmost Strength and Industry, and his Obligation thereto enforced with eternal Rewards and Punishments; yea, that he should use Means for the Preservation of Rational self, with as much Care and Diligence as he does for the Preservation of sensitive Self. So let him read, hear, pray and consider as one that necessarily desires Happiness, and can't desire Torment and Misery, not slothfully and triflingly, but prudently and constantly. Don't be unmerciful, barbarous, cruel and unnatural to your selves. Don't love Misery, in its Cause, Sin; don't hate Happiness in the Means thereof, Holiness. Act like Men that have Reason as well as Sense. Judge by Reason and not by Sense, what is good and to be pursued, what is evil and to be avoided. Pursue your Safety, avoid your Misery. Fear what is hurtful; hope for what is beneficial. Act like Men that have a natural Bias to Happiness, like Men that can't desire Torment. Have Pity upon your selves; your own Souls, your own Happiness, your own Misery, your own Danger must be regarded. If you would not be burnt, don't throw your selves into the Fire; If you would not be damn'd, don't continue in Impenitency. If you care not for God, yet care for your selves. Take Care of your Souls and Happiness, and don't hurt your selves. Don't wrong your Souls, have Compassion on your selves. Don't act against your Happiness and Safety: Tho' you regard not what becomes of God's Honour,

hour, yet regard your Self-preservation. Don't take more Pleasure in abusing God, than in pursuing your own Safety. Don't act against God and Nature, in continuing unconcerned about his Honour and thy Happiness. O don't cast self upon the punishing Justice of a Sin-revenging God. Open thine Eyes, look before thee, foresee the Happiness offer'd to encourage thy Hope, and the Misery denounced to awaken thy Fears. Let sensitive be subordinate to rational Self, and let rational Self command sensitive. Improve your natural self-Love to the exciting your Love of God. Make not your selves the chief Rule and End. Don't act as if you were the supream Being, and God your Vassal: As if there were more engaging Excellency in a contemptible Creature, than in the Creator: As if an inferiour Good was more desirable than the supream Goodness: As if the derived Excellencies in the Creature were more entertaining than the universal Amiableness. Don't depose the great God in your Esteem, Choice and Pursuit. Don't desire God's Will to be brought to yours. Don't such choose a base and brutal Happiness, as make self-pleasing and self-seeking, in Opposition to God, their highest End? Are they not guilty of damnable Idolatry? Do they not herein equalize themselves with the Beasts? Are they not barbarously cruel to their own Souls? Do they not slight its Happiness in using it as a Tool, to contrive and cater for the Body? Will not an eternal Separation from the chief Good be a just Punishment of your supream Love of an inferiour Good?

Good? Can you truly love your selves, and not love him that gave you your selves, that gives you all, who will be instead of all, yea better than all besides? Is it not the greatest Judgment to be given up of God to your selves? Are you not most miserable in your selves as withdrawn from your Dependance on God, Subordination to God, and Blessedness in God! Will not an Hell arise out of the Bowels of Sin? Does not carnal Selfishness tend to Misery? Is it not Misery in it self consider'd? Sin and Punishment are so in-wrought in the very Being of the Thing, as that if you choose the former, you cannot

Jer. 4. 18. escape the latter: *Thine own Wickedness shall correct thee, thy Ways and thy Doings have procured these Things; this is thy Wickedness. His*

Prov. 5. 22. *own Iniquity shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the Cords of his Sin.* Oh therefore as you necessarily love your selves, choose what is best in it self, and best for you. See your own Interest, consult your own Welfare, and don't rob God of the Use and Service of his Creatures. Don't contemn his Right of Government. Don't say you had rather displease him by breaking his Law, than displease your selves by acting against corrupt Inclinations. You cannot but wish well to your selves, open your Eyes, look before you, consider wherein your Safety lies; not in being your own chief End, not in following the Conduct of Sense before Reason, not in subordinating your Souls to your Bodies, not in being Slaves to a brutish Appetite, not in preferring temporal things before eternal, not in using your selves as if you were
absolute

absolute Proprietors, not in being at your own Disposal and in your own Hands, not in seeking principally the things of this Life before another, not in trusting your selves rather than God, not in living as if you were unaccountable after this Life, no ; for Self as separated from its State of Dependance and Subjection, is in a State of Misery, and in the broad Way to eternal Misery.

Return home to God, your ultimate Good and final Rest, by Faith in the Mediator as authorized, and use diligently the subordinate Means of Grace. Wait dependently on the Spirit of Grace, for that Grace that will enable you to close with Christ, as commission'd to recover you to Happiness in God, by recovering you to your Knowledge of God, Dependance on God, and Subordination to God and your selves. The Ends of this Principle of Self-preservation can only be attain'd by Faith in the Mediator. The Gospel shews you the only true Way to get Faith. Read this Gospel ; attend on the Ministry ; exercise your reasoning Powers about your Safety and the Way thereto. Look upward by Prayer for divine Help, and don't deny your selves the Enjoyment of the highest Good, by refusing to disclaim and renounce carnal self, sinful, foolish, rebellious, brutish self. Don't refuse the Solaces of Angels for the Pleasures of a brutish Appetite. God will attain his End upon you whether you will or no. You may sin your self from under his Favour, but not from under his Dominion. His Will must be done upon you, if not done by you. *Lord, when thy Hand is lifted*

lifted up they will not hear, but they shall hear. They that will not go to Heaven in God's Way, must go to Hell in their own Way. He will make you know whose Word shall stand, yours or God's. Do you provoke the Lord to Jealousy? Are you stronger than he? Do you not provoke your selves to the Confusion of your own Faces? And therefore shew Compassion to your selves: act like such that cannot desire Misery and Torment, but necessarily and naturally desire Safety and Self-preservation.

6thly. To enforce your Submission to God's wise Methods of Grace, to qualify you for Glory: Consider the Certainty of a present Reward. You need not stay till the other Life, to be assur'd of the Truth of Things: Make but an Experiment, and you may be satisfied here. Resign your Souls quietly into the Hands of an authoriz'd Mediator, as authoriz'd. Consent heartily to his Work and Office, conscienciously follow his Conduct. Give up your selves with as much Industry to please God, as you have done to please the Flesh, and I dare venture all that's dear in this and the other World, your Labour shall not be in vain. The gracious God will not suffer you to be finally disappointed. *If any Man will do his Will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of my self.* No better way to be assur'd of the Truth than by doing God's Will. The Goodness of the divine Nature, the Fitness of the Means, and his very Command to use them, carrieth Encouragement
 Heb. 11.6. sufficient in their Nature to make Trial. He

John 7.
17.

is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him. His Precepts as to Eating and Drinking, carrieth Encouragement enough that ordinarily God will bless suitable Food for the Preservation of natural Life. Does not his Commands to hear, read and pray, carry Encouragement, that he will ordinarily bless the diligent Use thereof for the begetting and perfecting Grace? Make Trial, Taste and see that the Lord is good, and I doubt not you will say as the Samaritans, Now we John 4. believe, not because of thy Saying, for we have heard him our selves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the World. A May be, a Who can tell, a Peradventure, a Who knows but, is a powerful Motive to great Undertakings as to the Things of this Life; and shall not this be sufficient to engage us to act for God, and our Salvation? What moves the Merchant to adventure, but perhaps he may have a good Return? What greater Encouragement has the Seeds-man than a May be he shall have a good Harvest? What greater Motive had Baruch to read the Roll in the Ears of the People, but It may be they will present their Supplication and return? Or what Motive did God himself give Jeremiah Jer. 36. to preach to Judah, but It may be they will bear and return? Read Joel 2. 12, 14. Who knows if he will return and leave a Blessing? It may be that the Lord of Hosts will be gracious. Amos 5. Who can tell if God will turn away from his fierce Anger, that we perish not, Zeph. 2. 3. It may be they shall be hid in the Day of his Anger. If perhaps the Thoughts of their Heart may be forgiven. Act. 8. 22. If all these afford Encouragement to improve

improve received Talents, then much more the Certainty of a present Reward, as an Earnest of a greater. Therefore labour for the Meat that endures to eternal Life: Strive to enter in at the straight Gate: Work out your Salvation, for 'tis God that works in you both to will and to do, of his good Pleasure. Christ accomplishes the Ends of his Suretyship by his Spirit, consistently with the Honour of God's Authority, and the Exercise of Man's reasonable Nature. As we can do nothing without his Assistance, so he ordinarily will not assist but in the Way of Diligence. The first and second Cause are united in Operation. 'Tis no Dishonour for the supream to work with the subordinate. *Man's Goings are of the Lord; how then can he understand his Way?* And yet the wise Man's Eyes are in his Head. *It is not in Man that walketh to direct his Steps; and yet the prudent Man foreseeth the Evil, and hides himself.* Christ saves his Church in such a wise Order as maintains the Glory of his Office; and yet exerciseth the Sinner's Thoughts and Care, in working out his Salvation. Divine Habits are infus'd after the Manner of acquir'd Habits, and the Necessity of special Grace to enable us to comply with Christ as authorized, does not preclude but enforce Industry.

Lastly. From the Consideration of the Divine Wisdom in the Application of Redemption, we infer the Reasonableness of continued Submission to God's wise Methods of Grace, for the exerting, exercising and perfecting of Grace. You that are regenerate must continue to act as Children of God the

Father,

Eccl. 2.
15.

Prov. 22.
13.

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Father, as Members of God the Son, and as Temples of God the Holy Ghost. Resign all to your absolute Sovereign; subject all to your rightful Governour; thankfully receive all from your gracious Benefactor: Persevere in the Exercise of daily Self-surrender, Subjection and Gratitude. Continue teachable, as Christ's Disciples; governable, as his Subjects, in a Way of absolute Reliance on his Merits. Continue your Subordination to the Spirit's Office: Use subservient Means with Diligence: Concur with his Operations: Depend on his Assistance; and improve all Means and Seasons of his Help. You have Encouragement so to do; for *the Word of Acts 20. God's Grace is able to build you up. Pastors are given for the Perfecting of the Saints; and Christ Eph. 4. has pray'd, Sanctify them through thy Truth; John 17. thy Word is Truth: To enforce which Advice, 17. consider,*

1st. That all the Ends and Uses whereunto you were enabled to receive Christ, as authorized, are not yet perfectly attain'd. *Not as Phil. 3. though I had already attain'd, either were already 12, 13, 14. perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not my self to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before; I press towards the Mark, &c. From a Sense of Ignorance of the Chief Good, and the Way to its Enjoyment, you consented to God-man, as Prophet, to be instructed; and do you need no more Knowledge of God's Attributes, of the invisible State, and Gospel Mysteries! Do*
H you

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you need no further Information of Christ's Person, Natures and Mediation, of the Suitableness of his Offices, of the Purity of the Law, of the Malignity of Sin, and Excellency of Holiness? Do you want no clearer Conceptions of the Spirit's Office, your Relation to Father, Son, and Spirit, and the Obligations thence resulting? Are not your Apprehensions dark concerning the New Covenant, its Benefits, Terms, and the Relations wherein Christ stands to the Believer by Vertue thereof. Do you not need more Knowledge of God, and yourselves, of your Disease and Remedy, of your Snares and Dangers, of your Spiritual Enemies and Supports? Are there no Remainders of Spiritual Darkness? Are you yet beyond the Apostle, who knew but in part? Does not your Covenant consent to Christ as your Teacher, bind you to a regular Dependence on him for perfecting of your Knowledge? Does not the Ends and Uses whereunto you receiv'd him, bind you to a continued Submission to his wise Methods of Grace? Must not you hear, read, pray and study the more in Reliance on the Redeemer, and in Subserviency to his Spirit's Teachings? Does not your Neglects hereof contradict the Design of your Covenant-Relation?

Did you not from a Sense of your Guilt comply with Christ as your Priest and Advocate, to be acquitted and accepted as righteous before God? And do you not daily need his Righteousness to keep you in a State of Acceptation? Could you, when awaken'd with a feeling Sense of the evil Nature of Sin,

of

of the Wrath of God, and the Law's Curse, find any Refuge but in Christ's Righteousness? Oppose any thing to strict Justice? Or interpose any thing betwixt the Law's Curse, and your guilty Souls, but that? What else could you then bottom your Hopes of Pardon upon, as answering the Demands of strict Justice, as securing the Honour of God's Attributes? Not on any thing wrought in you, or done by you, but on Righteousness greater than that of innocent *Adam*, greater than was required by the Law of Works, greater than that of an Angel, yea, than of all the Elect Angels: even upon the whole Performance of God-man in our Nature.

Considering the Holiness of God, the Extent of his Law, the Terror of his Majesty, and Defects of our best Services, nothing can be our pleadable Security at God's Bar, according to the Terms of the Gospel, but the Righteousness of Christ. We must all say as *David*, If thou, Lord, shouldst mark Iniquity, O Lord, who could stand. Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, O Lord. We don't present our Supplications for our own Righteousness, but for thy great Mercy. Tho' I were righteous, yet would I make Supplication to my Judge. We need daily Pardon as much as daily Bread. Deserve to be daily condemned, and therefore need Christ's Righteousness to keep us in a State of Acceptance with God. In many things we offend all. There is not a just Man upon Earth that does good and sins not. Who can say, I am clean, I am pure from mine Iniquity. If I should say I am perfect, that will prove me perverse. Tho' upon your first Closure with Christ you were

Psal. 103.

3, 4.

Psal. 143.

2.

Dan. 9.

18.

Job 9. 15.

Jam. 3. 2.

Eccl. 7. 20.

Prov. 20.

9.

Job 9. 20.

deliver'd from eternal Condemnation, yet there is a Succession of Guilt to be daily taken off, you have daily Sins of Infirmary as you are imperfect, to be pardon'd, and therefore must have constant Recourse to Christ. Your Covenant-Consent to your Saviour binds to a continued Dependance on his Righteousness.

Did you not from a Sense of your Rebellions and Weakness, consent to Christ as your Head of vital Influence to be subdu'd and strengthen'd? Have you no remaining Aversion to be overcome? No abiding Enmity to be subdued? No Weakness to be supported under, No Principles of Rebellion to be destroy'd? Are you perfectly compliant with God's Law? Have you yet attained? Is not Grace weak, Corruption strong, Temptations violent, and consequently don't you need to be strengthened? Do's not the End whereunto you receiv'd Christ bind you to a constant Dependance on him? Are the Designs of his Mediation perfectly attain'd? Therefore continue your Submission to God's wise Methods of Grace, for the exerting, exercising, and perfecting of Grace. Often renew your Choice of him, Surrender to him, and Reliance on him. Daily advance in your Knowledge of him, and love to him. Get nearer to him in Assimilation and Fruition. To neglect subordinate Means under a pretence of exalting Christ is vile Presumption; to neglect Dependance on Christ under a pretence of Diligence in the Use of Means, is sinful Idolatry. Therefore rely intirely on him as authoriz'd; in his way have regular

Re-

Recourse to him; Continue your Submission to his wise Methods of Grace; and absolutely depend on his Grace.

2dly. Consider your daily Necessities as new Creatures, call for constant Communications of Divine Help and Strength from Christ, and therefore must continue your Submission to God's wise Methods of Grace. Our Being and Action is dependant on God as Creatures, much more as new Creatures. *In him we* Acts 17. *move and live, and have our Being.* If natural Life and Motion can't be maintain'd without a causal Influx from God as the Author of Nature, then spiritual Life and Action cannot be maintain'd without vital Influxes from God in Christ, as the Fountain of Grace. *God has given us eternal Life in his Son.* John. 5. All is in him radically and causally, as in our common Store-house. The Believer being left to trade only with his first Stock, would quickly prove a Bankrupt: He needs therefore constant Emanations of Life, Light, and Love from his Head of vital Influence. Old Comforts will no more support under fresh Trials, without new Supply, than the last Week's Provision will support us the next. The Comfort therefore God gave *Paul* was, *My Grace is sufficient*, what I have to dispende, 1 Cor 12. to impart and communicate, shall be sufficient, not what thou hast already receiv'd. As Creatures we are defective, necessitous, and dependant: And therefore God's Mercies must be *renewed every Morning.* Old En- Lam. 3. joyments will not bear up under new Distress without present Aids. One that has had large Experience of Divine Favour, under former

Psal. 63.

3.
Psal. 89.

49.

Lam. 3.

24.

Ver. 18.

Desertion, can scarce tell how to bear up under new Desertion. Tho' he has found God's *loving Kindness better than Life*, yet he is ready to cry out, *Lord, where are thy former loving Kindnesses*. Tho' he could once say, *The Lord is my Portion*, yet then he is ready to complain, *My Strength and my Hope is perishing from the Lord*. Therefore as we need new Influences of Life and Strength from Christ, so we must continue our Submission to God's wise Methods of Grace for it. Because God has stored up all we need as to Grace and Comfort in Christ; consequently he must be our All in our Want of all. We are imperfect Creatures: Our Knowledge mix'd with Ignorance, our Faith with Unbelief, our Hope with Distrust, our Reverence of God with slavish Fear, and therefore must have daily Recourse to Christ. As Necessities return, Supplies must return, or we shall languish and despond.

3^{dly}. Consider that the Delight which arises from a felt Union of the Soul with the highest Good, will be a sufficient Reward of all your Diligence in the Use of Means. There is not only a Federal Union, whence results a Right in Gospel Immunities and Privileges, but a Union of Will and Designs, with God, by reason of a Con-natural Principle, whence will arise Divine Complacencies. The more this Principle is improv'd by holy Actings, the more is the Soul con-naturaliz'd to the State of Things above, whence flows Substantial Delights. An intellectual Faculty must have an intellectual Object, from its Union whereto, arise intellectual Delights.

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As its Thirst after Happiness is boundless, so must the Object that satisfies its Desires, and the Delight that it has in the Enjoyment thereof, be surpassing: From the Largeness of its Capacities, we may gather the Largeness of that Good which must fill them: From both, we may gather the excellent Nature of its Enjoyments: And from altogether, the Reasonableness of Industry in the Use of subordinate Means, for a Meetness and Aptitude in order to Divine Communion. God and the Creature are not so far distant, but a Commerce may be settled betwixt them. He sensibly at some times communicates his Love and Grace to qualified Subjects, upon which the holy Soul is enabled to spend all its Powers most gladly and reverently upon God. Then it thinks no Care too great, no Industry too much, no Caution too powerful to prevent the Interruption of its Converse, and procure the Continuance thereof. The Descent of holy Life, Light and Love from God, causes the Soul's vigorous Ascent towards God. From both arises filling Enjoyments. The Fruits of distinguishing Love in the Foretastes of Heaven are unspeakably sweet. *The Consolations of God are not small. The Peace of God passeth all Understanding. The Loving-kindness of God is better than Life.* In such a Season the Believer enjoys an Heaven on this side Heaven: Yea, has an Heaven as it were opened from within. God honours him sometimes with the Beamings forth of Divine Favour; upon which, from clear Ideas of his being the most con-natural Good, it predominantly cleaves to him, longs after him, and rejoyces in him

as such. Oh then what clear Conceptions of his Gracious Nature and Loveliness? How plainly is Truth discerned in its fullest Evidence? What Freedom of Thought about Divine Objects? What a mighty Tendency of Soul towards God? What firm Dependence on him, and profound Complacency in him? What satisfying Tasts of Divine Love? What deep Impressions of Holiness are made hereby? What restless Endeavours within the Soul after more intimate Union to, and fuller Enjoyment of God? How weary of its distant State? How is it burden'd with remaining Sin? Disengag'd from earthly Things, and satisfiedly restless to be above? It rests in its Enjoyments; but can't perfectly rest, because of the Imperfection thereof. Oh then what pleasant Outgoings of Soul to God? What Raisedness of Temper? What lively Actings of Love? What delightful Enlargements?

4thly. Consider that the Comfort of enjoyed Communion in the Church below, is a Pledge of perfect Communion in the Church above. Every Taste of Divine Goodness is not only matter of present Chearfulness, but ground of future Hope. Spiritual Experience therefore should excite Industry: 'Tis not only Soul-satisfying while enjoy'd, but an Earnest of more. *Thou hast holden me by thy right Hand.* What use does he make of it, v. 21. *Thou wilt guide me by thy Counsels, and afterward receive me to Glory.* That present Support was an Earnest of further Good. *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He restores my Soul.* Upon the Review whereof he concludes, *Surely Goodness and Mercy shall fol-*

Pla. 73.
23.

Pla. 23.

low me all the Days of my Life, ver. 6. Infinite Goodness will never finally disappoint those ardent Desires after him, which an overpowering Sense of his own Love has enkindled in holy Souls. He will never reject his own Work, or deny his own Life, nor raise the Soul to such Mounts of Vision, if he did not intend it for the Beatific Vision. *If the Lord would have pleas'd to kill us, he would not have accepted our Offering, nor shew'd us all these things.* He would never have begun such a Work of Holiness, if he did not design it for Happiness. But former received Mercies, are Earnests of future Mercy. The Earnest of the future Inheritance is such an Assurance as is also a part thereof. The Delights which result from spiritual Intercourse are not only satisfying while enjoy'd, but a Ground to hope for Perfection. They not only supply the present Wants, but encourage future Dependance. The Psalmist pleads, *By thee I have been holden up from the Womb,* ver. 6. *Therefore cast me not off in the time of Old Age, forsake me not when my Strength faileth.* God would lose the Glory of former Mercies if he should give no further Mercies. *He who has deliver'd, and doth deliver,* may be depended on, that *he will deliver.* Past Experience therefore of Divine Love, must engage to Diligence in working out our Salvation. Judg. 13.
22.
Psalm 76.1.
2 Cor. 1.
10.

5thly. Consider therefore, that 'tis not want of Goodness in God, but of Faith and Fitness in us, that obstructs Divine Communications. God is good and does good, essentially and distributively good. As he is the First

First of Beings, so the Best of Beings, and therefore must have a Propension in his Nature to diffuse of his Goodness to capable Subjects. Consequently it must be our sinful Unfitness that bars the Effusions thereof. *The*

Iſa. 59. 1, Lord's Hand is not shortned that he cannot save,
 2. *nor his Ear heavy that he will not hear, but your Iniquities separate betwixt God and you.* If we

were better towards him, we might receive
Pſal. 81. 10. better from him. Open thy Mouth wide and I will fill it. Our Hearts are naturally so oppo-

site to Good, so void of holy Desires, so thirsty after things temporal, as to intercept the Beams of Divine Favour: To obstruct the Communications of his Grace, and interpose betwixt a gracious God and necessitous Creatures. We might ordinarily have more Peace of Mind, more Joy in the Holy Ghost, more Assurance of God's Love, if we walked more closely and circumspectly with God: and therefore none must blame God, but lay the Blame upon themselves, that they enjoy no more of his Goodness. 'Tis our Incapacity and Indisposition that bars Divine Communications. God is the Universal Good, and therefore the most diffusive Good: consequently the Design of Christ's Work is not to make God better, but us better; not to render God more disposed to do us good, but us more disposed to receive the Fruits of his Goodness. It was not God that lost his Goodness by the Fall, but Man: and therefore the Change to be made must be on Man, not on God who is unchangeably Good. This his Goodness was everlastingly ready to stream forth from his own self-communicative
 Ful-

Fulness unto capable Subjects. Therefore continue your Submission to his wise Methods of Grace, persevere in the Use of Means, in order to remove a sinful Incapacity. *Is the Spirit of the Lord straitned? Are these his Doings? Don't my Words do good to him that walketh uprightly.* Mica. 2. 7. God is as merciful to design Good, as gracious to promise Good, and as powerful to perform his Promise as ever: but the Reason why he threatens and not promises, is from your selves, not from any Decay of Mercy in him. Do you as *Jacob* did, and you shall have what *Jacob* had; be of better Carriage towards him, and you shall receive a better Message from him. The Creature stands differently in a different Relation, and becomes capable of different Dispensations, as it alters from bad to good, or from good to better; or contrariwise: the Capacity or Incapacity of the Receiver does much as to all Changes, tho' efficiently nothing at all. Therefore labour for such a receptive Capacity as makes meet for the Divine Favour. God would not have his People take up with past Mercies so as to look no further. The Remainders of Spiritual Blessings in the Covenant to be communicated or suspended according to our Fitness or Unfitness, shews God would not have us to take up with present Attainments, but to endeavour after an Appetite for more. 'Tis certain those that walk most closely with God, that improve present Talents, that maintain a good Frame, that abound in holy Ejaculations, shall ordinarily have more grounded Peace, more gracious Answers, more inward Supports, and confirming

firming Experience of God's Favour, than such as by Omissions or indulg'd Carelessness indispose themselves. Therefore we must lay the Blame of our Dejections and Complaints upon our selves, not upon God. 'Tis not the want of Goodness in God, but of Fitness in us, that hinders our Spiritual Mercies.

6thly. Consider that the Nearness of the Covenant Relation does not exempt from the most severe Chastisements, in default of persevering Diligence. As the Hypostatic Union did not free Christ the Head of the Church from the severest Trials, when he stood in our Stead on Earth: So the Mystical Union will not exempt his Members from dreadful Afflictions in their State of Trial. *If need*

1 Pet. 1. *be, ye are in Heaviness thro' manifold Temptations.*

6. God's Faithfulness ensures them, if necessary,

Psal. 119. *In Faithfulness thou hast afflicted me.* He can

75. perfect Sanctification by his Rod, as well as

Heb. 12. *by his Word. He chasteneth us for our Profit,*

10. *that we may be made Partakers of his Holiness.*

Grace is not perfected, nor Heaven ordinarily enjoy'd upon the first Conversion; but in the Order, Season, and Degree determined upon in the Mediatory Covenant: For there must be a Conformity betwixt the Mystical Head and Members. God never promised that he would not correct, but only that he would *correct in measure.* Not to keep

Jer. 30. *us from Temptation, but from being tempted*

11. *above what we are able to bear.* Grace therefore

1 Cor. 10. *does not secure from Trouble, if we be negli-*

13. *gent in the Use of Means. God has ways e-*
nough to chastise his People, tho' he don't
finally

finally reject them. The Nearness of your Relation to him shall not protect you from Afflictions of Soul, Body, Estate, Relations and good Name, if they are not diligent in working out their Salvation. You only have I known, therefore will I punish you. And of all Troubles, Soul Troubles are the most grievous, a wounded Spirit, who can bear. Considering the Greatness of God, the Frailty of Man, the Nature of spiritual Troubles, the Souls receptive Capacity of God's Frowns, and the Sympathy betwixt Soul and Body, we must conclude the Beamings forth of his Displeasure are dreadful. And how can it be otherwise, if we consider they are of the same Nature with those that consummate the Misery of the Damned. There's the Punishment of Loss: at such a Season, the Soul in its own Apprehension has lost the Favour of God; hence are these Complaints, Lord, why hast thou cast off my Soul? Why hidest thou thy Face from me. It feels unspeakable Perplexity arising from such Apprehensions, and herein undergoes the Punishment of Sense. I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder. He breaks me with Breaches, and runs upon me like a Giant. Tremembred God, and was troubled, my Spirit was overwhelmed. It concludes from what it feels, that its Case is unalterable, and a Fore-runner of an eternal Separation; hence are these Cries, Is his Mercy clean gone, will he be favourable no more? Has he in Anger shut up his tender Mercies? One that hath felt these Sorrows cannot but pray as David, Lord, rebuke me not in thy Wrath, neither chasten me in thy hot Displeasure. By these dreadful and Soul-wounding

Amos 3.2.

Prov. 18.

Psal. 88.

14.

Job 16.

12, 13, 14.

Psal. 77.3.

Psal. 77.7.

8, 9.

Psal. 6. 1.

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wounding Corrections, God shews us the Evil of trifling with his Covenant; of disowning his Right of Government; will bring to remembrance our Vows, and our Neglects to answer them; the Greatness of his Majesty; the Malignity of Sin; and will increase our Reverence of his Holiness: This way he shews the Danger of Security, the great Difference betwixt Earth and Heaven, and warns others to walk humbly with God: Thus will he teach us Sympathy with others, prevent our future Abuse of his gracious Presence, and prepare for greater Discoveries of his Favour here and hereafter.

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